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JOAN OF ARC
AND THE
ENGLISH
MAIL COACH

DE QUINCEY

NEW YORK

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THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

JOAN OF ARC
AND
THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH
CONTAINING ALSO
LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

BY
THOMAS DE QUINCEY

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY
JULIAN W. ABERNETHY, PH.D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE BERKELEY INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN, N.Y.
AUTHOR OF "ABERNETHY'S AMERICAN LITERATURE"



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“pugilistic” brother, “whose genius for mischief amounted to inspiration,” the shy, sensitive, diminutive Thomas was occupied constantly during his early years with books and daydreams. “From my birth,” he says, “I was made an intellectual creature, and intellectual in the highest sense my pursuits and pleasures have been even from my schoolboy days.” He first received instruction from a clergyman in Manchester; he spent two years at the Bath Grammar School, and a year at a private school in Wiltshire. Everywhere he was regarded as a prodigy in classical learning. Before he was fifteen he could write and speak Greek with ease, and compose lyric poems in both Latin and Greek. One of his masters said to a visitor: “That boy could harangue an Athenian mob better than you or I could address an English one.” In his fifteenth year he was entered at the Manchester Grammar School for a term of three years, where it was expected he would obtain a university scholarship; but at the end of a year and a half, the monotonous and uninspiring life of the school having become intolerable to him, he ran away, slipping out of the head master’s house early one July morning, with an English poet in one pocket and Euripides in the other. His mother looked upon the act “much as she would have done upon the opening of the seventh seal in the Revelations”; but a lenient uncle arranged that he should have his liberty, with an allowance of a guinea a week. After a few months of vagrancy in North Wales, during which he “suffered grievously from want of books,” with that strange perversion of common sense which characterized his actions through life, he abandoned friends and support and hid himself in the wilderness of London. His mysterious adventures and sufferings at this time constitute that “impassioned parenthesis” of his life, the description of which reads like one of his marvelous opium

dreams. After about a year of this penniless London life he was discovered by his friends and sent to Oxford, in the autumn of 1803.

Of De Quincey's university career little is known farther than that he won the reputation of being "a quiet and studious man, remarkable for his rare conversational powers, and for his extraordinary stock of information on every subject"; that he read prodigiously, especially in German literature and philosophy; and that he left without taking a degree. He may have neglected much of the venerable lore of Oxford — "ancient mother, heavy with ancestral honors, time-honored, and, haply it may be, time-shattered," as he calls her; but it was here that he laid the foundation of his literary fame, mainly by mastering the great English classics. The nobility of his stately prose and the fullness of his poetic thought bear ample evidence of the early influence of Milton, Shakespeare, Sir Thomas Browne, and Jeremy Taylor.

De Quincey had been strongly attracted toward Wordsworth through his poetry, and in 1809 he took possession of the little cottage at Grasmere that had recently been the poet's home. Here he lived about twenty years, in intimate relations with the famous "Lakists," Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Lloyd, and Wilson. Here occurred the long struggle with the opium habit, from the horrors of which arose the splended visions embodied in the poetic prose of his *Confessions*. He had experimented with the pernicious drug at Oxford while suffering from neuralgia, and from the moment that he first experienced its wonderful effects he was the slave of opium; and was never afterwards without a supply of the "ruby-colored laudanum." During the years 1804-1818 the habit grew upon him until his daily allowance of laudanum was 8000 drops, increased often to 12,000, enough to fill nine

ordinary wineglasses. The result was a complete paralysis of the will; reading and dreaming constituted his sole occupation during this period.

He had married, in 1816, the daughter of a dalesman at the wayside cottage near by, known to tourists as "The Nab"; and aroused finally by domestic necessities, he partially subdued his enemy and engaged in productive literary work. In 1821 his first paper appeared in the *London Magazine*, entitled *Confessions of an Opium-Eater, being an Extract from the Life of a Scholar*. It was widely read; the author was immediately made famous; and for many years the public hailed with delight any article signed by the "English Opium-Eater." All his best work, comprising about one hundred and fifty articles, appeared in magazines, mainly in the *London Magazine*, *Blackwood's*, *Tait's*, and *Hogg's Instructor*. His connection with *Blackwood's* naturally led him to remove, in 1830, to Edinburgh, where he died December 8, 1859. From 1840 his home was a secluded cottage at Lasswade, seven miles from town.

The eccentric appearance and habits of De Quincey have always been a fertile theme for anecdote. His figure was small and fragile, with a fine intellectual head and lofty brow, "rising disproportionately high over his small, wrinkly visage and gentle, deep-set eyes." He says of himself: "A more worthless body than his own, the author is free to confess, cannot be. It is his pride to believe that it is the very ideal of a base, crazy, despicable human system that hardly ever could have been meant to be seaworthy for two days under the ordinary storms and wear and tear of life." He was as great a walker as Wordsworth, delighting especially in nocturnal rambles. He could keep no account of money or time, being, in the conduct of his finances, as picturesquely incompetent as

Goldsmith. It is said that he once stopped at Wilson's to escape a shower and remained nearly a year. He studiously avoided society, but when secured — usually by stratagem — for an evening at the tables of the great, his conversation was as brilliant as that of Macaulay. Those who heard him, speak with enthusiasm of "the magic of his talk, its sweet and subtle ripples of anecdote and suggestion, its witching splendor when he rose to his highest." "The talk might be of beeves, and he could grapple with them, if expected to do so; but his musical cadences were not in keeping with such work, and in a few minutes (not without some strictly logical sequence) he would escape at will from beeves to butterflies, and thence to the soul's immortality, to Plato, and Kant, and Schelling, and Fichte, to Milton's early years and Shakspeare's sonnets, to Wordsworth and Coleridge, to Homer and Æschylus, to St. Thomas of Aquino, St. Basil, and St. Chrysostom."

"An obvious characteristic of De Quincey's writings," says Professor Masson, "is their extreme multifariousness. They range over an extraordinary extent of ground, the subjects of which they principally treat being themselves of the most diverse kinds, while their illustrative references and allusions shoot through a perfect wilderness of miscellaneous scholarship." His essays upon metaphysical topics, theology, and political economy are chiefly interesting as examples of his speculative tendency and his remarkable power of analysis and illustration. His best biographical papers are the *Recollections of the Lake Poets*, *Dr. Parr*, *Richard Bentley*, *Shakspeare*, and the *Last Days of Immanuel Kant*. Some of his finest work is contained in the papers on *Rhetoric* and *Style*. His peculiar descriptive powers are illustrated in the *Revolt of the Tartars*, *The Spanish Nun*, and *Three Memorable*

Murders, and the ghastly humor of his essay *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts* is without a parallel. But probably the finest achievement of his genius is the descriptive writing, in "impassioned prose," as he himself styled it, of the *Confessions*, *Suspiria de Profundis*, *Levana* and *Our Ladies of Sorrow*, *Vision of Sudden Death*, and *Dream Fugue*. "The *Dream Fugue* is of no great compass," says Peter Bayne, "but we think that it would alone have been sufficient to secure a literary immortality."

DE QUINCEY'S STYLE

THE peculiar eminence of De Quincey is due, not to the matter, but to the manner, of his writings. In his own period he was read as a brilliant, somewhat sensational, and altogether fascinating magazine writer; to-day he is read and studied, never for his facts and seldom for his opinions, but as a master of English prose style. He was essentially a poet, who could best express himself in prose, and in that portion of his work that has become classic he sought to demonstrate that certain realms of literary expression usually conceded exclusively to verse can with ample justice be added to the domain of prose. This new form of poetic expression he described as a "mode of impassioned prose, ranging under no precedents that I am aware of in any literature." Such prose was not entirely new; Milton and Sir Thomas Browne had written passages of magnificent prose, rhythmical in its movement, and recording nobly imaginative and exalted states of mind; and these authors, together with Taylor and the German prose-poet, Jean Paul Richter, were strong influences with De Quincey. It is therefore unfortunate that he did not explain the distinction which he had in mind when speaking of a special "mode" of poetic prose. His meaning, however, has been worked out inferentially by Professor Masson from those writings which were manifestly intended to exemplify the theory.

"Our interpretation of his meaning," says Masson, "is that, while he was willing to take his chance of being

reputed capable of eloquent or impassioned writing in the general sense, what he reserved as the 'mode of impassioned prose' in which he could claim to be singular was a kind of new lyrical prose that could undertake the expression of feelings till then supposed unutterable except in verse. Oratory in some of its extremes — as when the feeling to be expressed is peculiarly keen and ecstatic — does tend to pass into song or metrical lyric; and De Quincey, in order to extend the powers of prose in this extreme and difficult direction, proposed to institute, one may say, a new form of prose literature nameable as the prose-lyric."

"All sound theorists are agreed in some variety or other of that definition of poetry which makes it to consist essentially in a particular kind of matter or mental product, — viz. the matter or product of the faculty or mood of mind called Imagination or Phantasy." But "there are peculiar kinds of phantasy for which prose in all ages has felt itself incompetent, or which it has been too shame-faced to attempt. Such, in especial, are the visionary phantasies that form themselves in the poetic mind in its most profound fits of solitary self-musing. . . . Now, as De Quincey had been a dreamer all his life, with an abnormal faculty of dreaming at work in him constitutionally from his earliest infancy, and with the qualification moreover that he had unlocked the terrific potencies of opium for the generation of dreams beyond the human, his idea seems to have been that, if prose would but exert itself, it could compass, almost equally with verse, or even better, the representation of some forms at least of dream-experience and dream-phantasmagory. Add this idea to that other of the possibility of a prose-lyric that should rival the verse-lyric in the ability to express the keenest and rarest forms of human feeling, or suppose the

two ideas combined, and De Quincey's conception of the exact nature of his service towards the extension of the liberties and powers of English prose will be fully apprehended."

De Quincey speaks incidentally of his style as "an elaborate and pompous sunset." This suggests the painter, but it was the musician whose art he chiefly emulated. Ruskin, the most eminent prose-poet after De Quincey, — and Pater must not be forgotten, — in his descriptions took account of all the material and visible effects of color in his subject; De Quincey, to a similarly extreme degree, took account of the musical possibilities of his theme. His color is tone color. For the description of the gorgeous phantasies of dreams and of ecstatic emotion he would make good the inadequacies of ordinary word symbols by appropriating the utilities of sound symbols. If we call Ruskin's description "word-painting," we may perhaps call De Quincey's description word-music. He sought to identify poetic expression and musical expression — as Sidney Lanier did, in a more technical and exact way — or, by combining the modes of verse and music, to produce an entirely new vehicle of expression, a new "mode" of prose.

The result of his experiment was a product of rhythmical harmonies, at times varied and broadened to symphonic proportions, of unparalleled beauty and effectiveness. Language was made to exercise a new function, to thrill the emotions by a direct sensuous appeal, like the appeal of harp strings or organ tubes. It was this peculiar, extraordinary power that so stirred Mrs. Browning when reading one of the *Blackwood* papers, which, she says, "my heart trembled through from end to end." Let the mind of any reader be once caught by the musical scheme of the *Dream Fugue*, and it will be swept on from

movement to movement, thrilled and enraptured, with increasing and compelling intensity, until finally absorbed in the exaltation of the triumphal climax at the close, like the climacteric close of a magnificent orchestra.

Naturally the vocabulary of De Quincey's poetic prose is largely Latinized. In no other way could he secure the sustained rhythms and stately cadences necessary to his purpose. Naturally, too, his sentence structure tends largely to the periodic form. Says Minto: "His sentences are stately, elaborate, crowded with qualifying clauses and parenthetical allusions, to a degree unparalleled among modern writers." In the revision of his work we find him constantly substituting for simple and colloquial phrases more sonorous Latin equivalents. But in this, as in other respects, his impassioned prose is sharply distinguished from his ordinary prose. His work is full of stylistic extremes and contradictions; no author ever could descend so swiftly from the sublime to the ridiculous. In his use of common, vulgar, unwashed Saxon, current slang, and the argot of rascallions of every type, he could keep pace with the best roisterers of Shakspeare's street scenes; and the taste with which he introduced comic features is often so questionable as to be quite unaccountable. His humor was a wayward tendency over which he seemed unable to exercise any artistic restraint whatsoever; he could no more resist a joke, even of the extremest ineptitude, than Lowell could resist an impertinent pun. In one of his prefaces he acknowledges this bent for "unseasonable levity," a term generously conceded, but all too mild to cover his many derelictions of taste in this respect.

In one of the minor features of his style, however, De Quincey was masterly. The minuteness and circumstantiality of detail with which he describes events, together

with a dramatic handling of his material, produce an illusion of reality quite as effective as that of Defoe. He is most painstaking and serious when perpetrating his most deliberate hoax, culling words from the vast resources of his vocabulary and weighing and discriminating them with scrupulous exactitude in respect to fine shades of meaning, giving to his descriptions a verisimilitude that baffles all attempts to disentangle his truth from his fiction. It was doubtless this peculiar effectiveness in narration and description, as in the *Flight of a Tartar Tribe* and the *Three Memorable Murders*, for example, that led Saintsbury to say: "Probably more boys have in the last forty years been brought to a love of literature proper by De Quincey than by any other writer whatever."

CRITICAL APPRECIATIONS

DE QUINCEY'S fame, established in his lifetime, has been growing ever since, and is still growing. He has, one may say, a constituency of special admirers over all the English-speaking world; and, by very evident signs, the circle of this constituency is every year extending itself. And why? Because every year it is more and more widely recognized that this strange man, dead now so many years ago, is one of the princes of English prose literature, and an almost unique personality in the whole history of English literature, whether in prose or in verse. . . . *The English Mail-Coach* and the *Suspiria de Profundis* have a certain interconnection, and possess between them the supreme interest in the class to which they belong. The first two sections of *The English Mail-Coach* are noble pieces of prose-poetry, and more successful, all in all, I think, than the appended *Dream Fugue*. Though that is an extraordinary piece of writing, too, and gains on one, perhaps, by repeated reading. The first three fragments of the *Suspiria*, besides being but a kind of wreckage from prior materials, are somewhat didactic in their tenor, and only prepare the way, and that rather raggedly, for the *Memorial Suspiria*, and the fragments called *Savannah-la-Mar* and *Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow*. Most memorable pieces of impassioned prose-phantasy are all these three; but it is the last that is transcendent. Even alone, *that* would have made De Quincey immortal.

— *David Masson, Prefaces to De Quincey's Works.*

De Quincey is sometimes noisy and flatulent, sometimes trivial, sometimes unpardonably discursive. But when he is at his best, the rapidity of his mind, its lucidity, its humor and good sense, the writer's passionate loyalty to letters, and his organ-melody of style, command our deep respect. He does not, like the majority of his critical colleagues, approach literature for purposes of research, but to obtain moral effects. De Quincey, a dreamer of beautiful dreams, disdained an obstinate vassalage to mere matters of fact, but sought with intense concentration of effort after a conscientious and profound psychology of letters.

— *Edmund Gosse's Modern English Literature.*

Even at his very best, he was not a writer who could be trusted to keep himself at that best. His reading was enormous — nearly as great, perhaps, as Southey's, though in still less popular directions — and he would sometimes drag it in rather inappropriately. He had an unconquerable and sometimes very irritating habit of digression, of divagation, of aside. And, worst of all, his humor, which in its own peculiar vein of imaginative grotesque has seldom been surpassed, was liable constantly to degenerate into a kind of labored trifling, inexpressibly exasperating to the nerves. He could be simply dull; and he can seldom be credited with the possession of what may be called literary tact.

Yet his merits were such as to give him no superior in his own manner among the essayists, and hardly any among the prose writers of the century. He, like Wilson, and probably before Wilson, deliberately aimed at a style of gorgeous elaboration, intended not exactly for common use, but for use when required; and he achieved it. Certain well-known passages in the *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, in the *Autobiography*, in the *English*

Mail-Coach, in *Our Ladies of Sorrow*, and elsewhere, are unsurpassed in English or out of it for imaginative splendor of imagery, suitably reproduced in words. Nor was this De Quincey's only, though it was his most precious gift. He had a singular, though, as has been said, a very untrustworthy faculty of humor, both grim and quaint. He was possessed of extraordinary dialectic ingenuity, a little alloyed no doubt by a tendency to wire-drawn and over-subtle minuteness, such as besets the born logician who is not warned of his danger either by a strong vein of common sense or by constant sojourn in the world. He could expound and describe admirably; he had a thorough grasp of the most complicated subjects when he did not allow will-o'-the-wisps to lure him into letting it go, and could narrate the most diverse kinds of action. — *George Saintsbury's History of Nineteenth Century Literature.*

One may fancy that if De Quincey's language were emptied of all meaning whatever, the mere sound of the words would move us, as the lovely word *Mesopotamia* moved Whitefield's hearers. The sentences are so delicately balanced, and so skillfully constructed, that his finer passages fix themselves in the memory without the aid of meter. Humbler writers are content if they can get through a single phrase without producing a jar. They aim at keeping up a steady jog-trot, which shall not give actual pain to the jaws of the readers. Even our great writers generally settle down to a stately but monotonous gait, after the fashion of Johnson or Gibbon, or are content with adopting a style as transparent and inconspicuous as possible. Language, according to the common phrase, is the dress of thought; and that dress is best, according to modern canons of taste, which attracts least attention from its wearer. De Quincey scorns this sneering maxim of prudence, and boldly challenges our admira-

tion by appearing in the richest coloring that can be got out of the dictionary. His language deserves a commendation sometimes bestowed by ladies upon rich garments, that it is capable of standing up by itself. The form is so admirable that, for purposes of criticism, we must consider it as something apart from the substance. The most exquisite passages in De Quincey's writings are all more or less attempts to carry out the idea expressed in the title of the *Dream Fugue*. They are intended to be musical compositions, in which words have to play the part of notes. They are impassioned, not in the sense of expressing any definite sentiment, but because, from the structure and combination of the sentences, they harmonize with certain phases of emotion. It is in the success with which he produces such effects as these that De Quincey may fairly claim to be almost, if not quite, unrivaled in our language. Melancholy and an awe-stricken sense of the vast and vague are the emotions which he communicates with the greatest power; though the melancholy is too dreamy to deserve the name of passion, and the terror of the infinite is not explicitly connected with any religious emotion. It is a proof of the fineness of his taste that he scarcely ever falls into bombast. We tremble at his audacity in accumulating gorgeous phrases; but we confess that he is justified by the result. I know of no other modern writer who has soared into the same regions with so uniform and easy a flight. — *Leslie Stephen's Hours in a Library*.

De Quincey ranges with great freedom over the accumulated wealth of the language, his capacious memory giving him a prodigious command of words. His range is perhaps wider than either Macaulay's or Carlyle's. From various causes he makes an excessive use of Latinized phraseology. First, his ear was deeply enamored of a

dignified rhythm; none but long words of Latin origin were equal to the lofty march of his periods. Secondly, by the use of Latinized and *quasi*-technical terms, he gained greater precision than by the use of homely words of looser signification. And thirdly, it was part of his peculiar humor to write concerning common objects, in unfamiliar language. . . . Explicitness of connection is the chief merit of De Quincey's paragraphs. He cannot be said to observe any other principle. He is carried into violation of all the other rules by his inveterate habit of digression. Often upon a mere casual suggestion he branches off into a digression of several pages, sometimes even digressing from the subject of his first digression. His general structure is not simple. Long periods, each embodying a flock of clauses, are abstruse reading. Even his explicitness of connection has not its full natural effect of making the effort of comprehension easy. . . . His prevailing characteristic is elaborate stateliness. He finds the happiest exercise of his powers in sustained flights through the region of the sublime. He takes rank with Milton as one of our greatest masters of stately cadence, as well as of sublime composition. If one may trust one's ear for a general impression, Milton's melody is sweeter and more varied; but for magnificent effects, at least in prose, the palm must probably be assigned to De Quincey.

— *Minto's Manual of English Prose Literature.*

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SELECTIONS FROM DE QUINCEY

JOAN OF ARC¹

IN REFERENCE TO M. MICHELET'S HISTORY OF FRANCE

WHAT is to be thought of *her*? What is to be thought of the poor shepherd girl from the hills and forests of Lorraine, that — like the Hebrew shepherd boy from the hills and forests of Judea — rose suddenly out of the quiet, out of the safety, out of 5 the religious inspiration, rooted in deep pastoral

¹ “*Arc*”: — Modern France, that should know a great deal better than myself, insists that the name is not D’Arc — *i.e.*, of Arc — but *Darc*. Now it happens sometimes that, if a person whose position guarantees his access to the best information will content himself with gloomy dogmatism, striking the table with his fist, and saying in a terrific voice, “*It is so, and there’s an end of it,*” one bows deferentially, and submits. But, if, unhappily for himself, won by this docility, he relents too amiably into reasons and arguments, probably one raises an insurrection against him that may never be crushed; for in the fields of logic one can skirmish, perhaps, as well as he. Had he confined himself to dogmatism, he would have intrenched his position in darkness, and have hidden his own vulnerable points. But coming down to base reasons he lets in light, and one sees where to plant the blows. Now, the worshipful reason of modern France for disturbing the old received spelling is that Jean Hordal, a descendant of La Pucelle’s brother, spelled the name *Darc* in 1612. But what of that? It is notorious that what small matter of spelling Providence had thought fit to disburse among man in the seventeenth century was all monopolized by printers; now, M. Hordal was *not* a printer.

solitudes, to a station in the van of armies, and to the more perilous station at the right hand of kings? The Hebrew boy inaugurated his patriotic mission by an *act*, by a victorious *act*, such as no man could deny. But so did the girl of Lorraine, if we read her story as it was read by those who saw her nearest. Adverse armies bore witness to the boy as no pretender; but so they did to the gentle girl. Judged by the voices of all who saw them *from a station of* 10 *good will*, both were found true and loyal to any promises involved in their first acts. Enemies it was that made the difference between their subsequent fortunes. The boy rose to a splendor and a noonday prosperity, both personal and public, that 15 rang through the records of his people, and became a byword among his posterity for a thousand years, until the scepter was departing from Judah. The poor, forsaken girl, on the contrary, drank no herself from that cup of rest which she had secured for 20 France. She never sang together with the songs that rose in her native Domrémy as echoes to the departing steps of invaders. She mingled not in the festal dances at Vaucouleurs which celebrated in rapture the redemption of France. No! for her 25 voice was then silent; no! for her feet were dust. Pure, innocent, noble-hearted girl! whom, from earliest youth, ever I believed in as full of truth and self-sacrifice, this was amongst the strongest pledges for *thy* truth, that never once — no, not for a moment 30 of weakness — didst thou revel in the vision of coronets and honor from man. Coronets for thee!

Oh, no! Honors, if they come when all is over, are for those that share thy blood.¹ Daughter of Domrémy, when the gratitude of thy king shall awaken, thou wilt be sleeping the sleep of the dead. Call her, King of France, but she will not hear thee. 5 Cite her by the apparitors to come and receive a robe of honor, but she will be found *en contumace*. When the thunders of universal France, as even yet may happen, shall proclaim the grandeur of the poor shepherd girl that gave up all for her country, thy 10 ear, young shepherd girl, will have been deaf for five centuries. To suffer and to do, that was thy portion in this life; that was thy destiny; and not for a moment was it hidden from thyself. Life, thou saidst, is short; and the sleep which is in the grave 15 is long; let me use that life, so transitory, for the glory of those heavenly dreams destined to comfort the sleep which is so long! This pure creature — pure from every suspicion of even a visionary self-interest, even as she was pure in senses more obvious 20 — never once did this holy child, as regarded herself, relax from her belief in the darkness that was traveling to meet her. She might not prefigure the very manner of her death; she saw not in vision, perhaps, the aerial altitude of the fiery scaffold, the spectators 25 without end, on every road, pouring into Rouen as to a coronation, the surging smoke, the volleying flames, the hostile faces all around, the pitying eye that lurked but here and there, until nature and imperish-

¹ “*Those that share thy blood*”:—A collateral relative of Joanna’s was subsequently ennobled by the title of *Du Lys*.

able truth broke loose from artificial restraints — these might not be apparent through the mists of the hurrying future. But the voice that called her to death, *that* she heard forever.

5 Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it; but well Joanna knew that not the throne, nor he that sat upon it, was for *her*; but, on the contrary, that she was for *them*; not she by them, but they by her, should rise from
 10 the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France, and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them; but well Joanna knew, early at Domrémy she had
 15 read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her*. Flower nor bud, bell nor blossom, would ever bloom for *her*!

* * * * *

But stay. What reason is there for taking up this subject of Joanna precisely in the spring of 1847? Might it not have been left till the spring of 1947,
 20 or, perhaps, left till called for? Yes, but it *is* called for, and clamorously. You are aware, reader, that amongst the many original thinkers whom modern France has produced, one of the reputed leaders is
 25 M. Michelet. All these writers are of a revolutionary cast; not in a political sense merely, but in all senses; mad, oftentimes, as March hares; crazy with the laughing gas of recovered liberty; drunk with the wine cup of their mighty Revolution, snorting,
 30 whinnying, throwing up their heels, like wild horses

in the boundless pampas, and running races of defiance with snipes, or with the winds, or with their own shadows, if they can find nothing else to challenge. Some time or other, I, that have leisure to read, may introduce *you*, that have not, to two or 5 three dozen of these writers; of whom I can assure you beforehand that they are often profound, and at intervals are even as impassioned as if they were come of our best English blood. But now, confining our attention to M. Michelet, we in England — who 10 know him best by his worst book, the book against priests, etc. — know him disadvantageously. That book is a rhapsody of incoherence. But his “History of France” is quite another thing. A man, in whatsoever craft he sails, cannot stretch away out 15 of sight when he is linked to the windings of the shore by towing-ropes of History. Facts, and the consequences of facts, draw the writer back to the falconer’s lure from the giddiest heights of speculation. Here, therefore — in his “France” — if not always 20 free from flightiness, if now and then off like a rocket for an airy wheel in the clouds, M. Michelet, with natural politeness, never forgets that he has left a large audience waiting for him on earth, and gazing upward in anxiety for his return; return, therefore, 25 he does. But History, though clear of certain temptations in one direction, has separate dangers of its own. It is impossible so to write a history of France, or of England — works becoming every hour more indispensable to the inevitably political man of this 30 day — without perilous openings for error. If I,

for instance, on the part of England, should happen to turn my labors into that channel, and (on the model of Lord Percy going to Chevy Chase)

5 “ A vow to God should make
 My pleasure in tht Michelet woods
 Three summer days to take,”

probably, from simple delirium, I might hunt M. Michelet into *delirium tremens*. Two strong angels stand by the side of History, whether French his-
10 tory or English, as heraldic supporters: the angel of research on the left hand, that must read millions of dusty parchments, and of pages blotted with lies; the angel of meditation on the right hand, that must cleanse these lying records with fire, even as of old the
15 draperies of *asbestos* were cleansed, and must quicken them into regenerated life. Willingly I acknowledge that no man will ever avoid innumerable errors of detail; with so vast a compass of ground to traverse, this is impossible; but such errors (though I
20 have a bushel on hand, at M. Michelet's service) are not the game I chase; it is the bitter and unfair spirit in which M. Michelet writes against England. Even that, after all, is but my secondary object; the real one is Joanna, the Pucelle d'Orléans herself.
25 I am not going to write the history of La Pucelle: to do this, or even circumstantially to report the history of her persecution and bitter death, of her struggle with false witnesses and with ensnaring judges, it would be necessary to have before us *all*
30 the documents, and therefore the collection only now

forthcoming in Paris.¹ But *my* purpose is narrower. There have been great thinkers, disdaining the careless judgments of contemporaries, who have thrown themselves boldly on the judgment of a far posterity, that should have had time to review, to ponder, to 5 compare. There have been great actors on the stage of tragic humanity that might, with the same depth of confidence, have appealed from the levity of compatriot friends — too heartless for the sublime interest of their story, and too impatient for the labor 10 of sifting its perplexities — to the magnanimity and justice of enemies. To this class belongs the Maid of Arc. The ancient Romans were too faithful to the ideal of grandeur in themselves not to relent, after a generation or two, before the grandeur of Hannibal. 15 Mithridates, a more doubtful person, yet, merely for the magic perseverance of his indomitable malice, won from the same Romans the only real honor that ever he received on earth. And we English have ever shown the same homage to stubborn 20 enmity. To work unflinchingly for the ruin of England; to say through life, by word and by deed, *Delenda est Anglia Victrix!* — that one purpose of malice, faithfully pursued, has quartered some people upon our national funds of homage as by a perpetual 25 annuity. Better than an inheritance of service rendered to England herself has sometimes proved the most insane hatred to England. Hyder Ali,

¹ “*Only now forthcoming*”: — In 1847 *began* the publication (from official records) of Joanna’s trial. It was interrupted, I fear, by the convulsions of 1848; and whether even yet finished I do not know.

even his son Tippoo, though so far inferior, and Napoleon, have all benefited by this disposition among ourselves to exaggerate the merit of diabolic enmity. Not one of these men was ever capable, in
 5 a solitary instance, of praising an enemy (what do you say to *that*, reader?); and yet in *their* behalf, we consent to forget, not their crimes only, but (which is worse) their hideous bigotry and anti-magnanimous egotism — for nationality it was not.
 10 Suffren, and some half dozen of other French nautical heroes, because rightly they did us all the mischief they could (which was really great), are names justly revered in England. On the same principle, La Pucelle d'Orléans, the victorious enemy
 15 of England, has been destined to receive her deepest commemoration from the magnanimous justice of Englishmen.

Joanna, as we in England should call her, but according to her own statement, Jeanne (or, as M.
 20 Michelet asserts, Jean¹) D'Arc was born at Domrémy,

¹ “*Jean*”:—M. Michelet asserts that there was a mystical meaning at that era in calling a child *Jean*; it implied a secret commendation of a child, if not a dedication, to St. John the evangelist, the beloved disciple, the apostle of love and mysterious visions. But, really, as the name was so exceedingly common, few people will detect a mystery in calling a *boy* by the name of Jack, though it *does* seem mysterious to call a girl Jack. It may be less so in France, where a beautiful practice has always prevailed of giving a boy his mother's name—preceded and strengthened by a male name, as *Charles Anne*, *Victor Victoire*. In cases where a mother's memory has been unusually dear to a son, this vocal memento of her, locked into the circle of his own name, gives to it the tenderness of a testamentary relic, or a funeral ring. I presume, therefore, that La Pucelle must have borne the baptismal

a village on the marches of Lorraine and Champagne, and dependent upon the town of Vaucouleurs. I have called her a Lorrainer, not simply because the word is prettier, but because Champagne too odiously reminds us English of what are for *us* imaginary 5 wines — which, undoubtedly, La Pucelle tasted as rarely as we English: we English, because the champagne of London is chiefly grown in Devonshire; La Pucelle, because the champagne of Champagne never, by any chance, flowed into the fountain of 10 Domrémy, from which only she drank. M. Michelet will have her to be a *Champenoise*, and for no better reason than that she “took after her father,” who happened to be a *Champenois*.

These disputes, however, turn on refinements too 15 nice. Domrémy stood upon the frontiers, and, like other frontiers, produced a *mixed* race, representing the *cis* and the *trans*. A river (it is true) formed the boundary line at this point — the river Meuse; and *that*, in old days, might have divided the popula- 20 tions; but in these days it did not; there were bridges, there were ferries, and weddings crossed from the right bank to the left. Here lay two great roads, not so much for travelers that were few, as for armies that were too many by half. These two 25 roads, one of which was the great highroad between France and Germany, *decussated* at this very point; which is a learned way of saying that they formed a St. Andrew’s Cross, or letter X. I hope the com-

name of Jeanne Jean; the latter with no reference, perhaps, to so sublime a person as St. John, but simply to some relative.

positor will choose a good large X; in which case the point of intersection, the *locus* of conflux and intersection for these four diverging arms, will finish the reader's geographical education, by showing him
5 to a hair's-breadth where it was that Domrémy stood. These roads, so grandly situated, as great trunk arteries between two mighty realms,¹ and haunted forever by wars or rumors of wars, decussated (for anything I know to the contrary)
10 absolutely under Joanna's bedroom window; one rolling away to the right, past M. D'Arc's old barn, and the other unaccountably preferring to sweep round that odious man's pigsty to the left.

On whichever side of the border chance had
15 thrown Joanna, the same love to France would have been nurtured. For it is a strange fact, noticed by M. Michelet and others, that the Dukes of Bar and Lorraine had for generations pursued the policy of eternal warfare with France on their own account,
20 yet also of eternal amity and league with France in case anybody else presumed to attack her. Let peace settle upon France, and before long you might rely upon seeing the little vixen Lorraine flying at the throat of France. Let France be assailed by a for-
25 midable enemy, and instantly you saw a Duke of Lorraine insisting on having his own throat cut in support of France; which favor accordingly was cheerfully granted to him in three great successive

¹ And reminding one of that inscription, so justly admired by Paul Richter, which a Russian Czarina placed on a guide-post near Moscow: *This is the road that leads to Constantinople.*

battles: twice by the English, viz., at Crécy and Agincourt, once by the Sultan at Nicopolis.

This sympathy with France during great eclipses, in those that during ordinary seasons were always teasing her with brawls and guerrilla inroads, strengthened the natural piety to France of those that were confessedly the children of her own house. The outposts of France, as one may call the great frontier provinces, were of all localities the most devoted to the Fleurs de Lys. To witness, at any great crisis, the generous devotion to these lilies of the little fiery cousin that in gentler weather was forever tilting at the breast of France, could not but fan the zeal of France's legitimate daughters; while to occupy a post of honor on the frontiers against an old hereditary enemy of France would naturally stimulate this zeal by a sentiment of martial pride, by a sense of danger always threatening, and of hatred always smoldering. That great four-headed road was a perpetual memento to patriotic ardor. To say "This way lies the road to Paris, and that other way to Aix-la-Chapelle; this to Prague, that to Vienna," nourished the warfare of the heart by daily ministrations of sense. The eye that watched for the gleams of lance or helmet from the hostile frontier, the ear that listened for the groaning of wheels, made the highroad itself, with its relations to centers so remote, into a manual of patriotic duty.

The situation, therefore, *locally*, of Joanna was full of profound suggestions to a heart that listened for the stealthy steps of change and fear that too surely

were in motion. But, if the place were grand, the time, the burden of the time, was far more so. The air overhead in its upper chambers was *hurtling* with the obscure sound; was dark with sullen fermenting
5 of storms that had been gathering for a hundred and thirty years. The battle of Agincourt in Joanna's childhood had reopened the wounds of France. Crécy and Poitiers, those withering overthrows for the chivalry of France, had, before Agincourt
10 occurred, been tranquilized by more than half a century; but this resurrection of their trumpet wails made the whole series of battles and endless skirmishes take their stations as parts in one drama. The graves that had closed sixty years ago seemed
15 to fly open in sympathy with a sorrow that echoed their own. The monarchy of France labored in extremity, rocked and reeled like a ship fighting with the darkness of monsoons. The madness of the poor king (Charles VI), falling in at such a crisis, like the
20 case of women laboring in childbirth during the storming of a city, trebled the awfulness of the time. Even the wild story of the incident which had immediately occasioned the explosion of this madness — the case of a man unknown, gloomy, and perhaps
25 maniacal himself, coming out of a forest at noonday, laying his hand upon the bridle of the king's horse, checking him for a moment to say, "Oh, king, thou art betrayed," and then vanishing, no man knew whither, as he had appeared for no man knew what
30 — fell in with the universal prostration of mind that laid France on her knees, as before the slow unweav-

ing of some ancient prophetic doom. The famines, the extraordinary diseases, the insurrections of the peasantry up and down Europe — these were chords struck from the same mysterious harp; but these were transitory chords. There had been others of 5 deeper and more ominous sound. The termination of the Crusades, the destruction of the Templars, the Papal interdicts, the tragedies caused or suffered by the house of Anjou, and by the Emperor — these were full of a more permanent significance. But, 10 since then, the colossal figure of feudalism was seen standing, as it were on tiptoe, at Crécy, for flight from earth: that was a revolution unparalleled; yet *that* was a trifle by comparison with the more fearful revolutions that were mining below the Church. 15 By her own internal schisms, by the abominable spectacle of a double Pope — so that no man, except through political bias, could even guess which was Heaven's vicegerent, and which the creature of Hell — the Church was rehearsing, as in still earlier forms 20 she had already rehearsed, those vast rents in her foundations which no man should ever heal.

These were the loftiest peaks of the cloudland in the skies that to the scientific gazer first caught the colors of the *new* morning in advance. But the 25 whole vast range alike of sweeping glooms overhead dwelt upon all meditative minds, even upon those that could not distinguish the tendencies nor decipher the forms. It was, therefore, not her own age alone, as affected by its immediate calamities, 30 that lay with such weight upon Joanna's mind, but

her own age as one section in a vast mysterious drama, unweaving through a century back, and drawing nearer continually to some dreadful crisis. Cataracts and rapids were heard roaring ahead; and 5 signs were seen far back, by help of old men's memories, which answered secretly to signs now coming forward on the eye, even as locks answer to keys. It was not wonderful that in such a haunted solitude, with such a haunted heart, Joanna should see angelic 10 visions, and hear angelic voices. These voices whispered to her forever the duty, self-imposed, of delivering France. Five years she listened to these monitory voices with internal struggles. At length she could resist no longer. Doubt gave way; and 15 she left her home forever in order to present herself at the dauphin's court.

The education of this poor girl was mean according to the present standard: was ineffably grand, according to a purer philosophic standard: and only 20 not good for our age because for us it would be unattainable. She read nothing, for she could not read; but she had heard others read parts of the Roman martyrology. She wept in sympathy with the sad "Misereres" of the Romish Church; she rose to 25 heaven with the glad triumphant "Te Deums" of Rome; she drew her comfort and her vital strength from the rites of the same Church. But, next after these spiritual advantages, she owed most to the advantages of her situation. The fountain of Dom- 30 rémy was on the brink of a boundless forest; and it was haunted to that degree by fairies that the parish

priest (*cure*) was obliged to read mass there once a year, in order to keep them in any decent bounds. Fairies are important, even in a statistical view: certain weeds mark poverty in the soil; fairies mark its solitude. As surely as the wolf retires before cities does the fairy sequester herself from the haunts of the licensed victualer. A village is too much for her nervous delicacy; at most, she can tolerate a distant view of a hamlet. We may judge, therefore, by the uneasiness and extra trouble which they gave to the parson, in what strength the fairies mustered at Domrémy, and, by a satisfactory consequence, how thinly sown with men and women must have been that region even in its inhabited spots. But the forests of Domrémy — those were the glories of the land: for in them abode mysterious powers and ancient secrets that towered into tragic strength. “Abbeys there were, and abbey windows” — “like Moorish temples of the Hindoos” — that exercised even princely power both in Lorraine and in the German Diets. These had their sweet bells that pierced the forests for many a league at matins or vespers, and each its own dreamy legend. Few enough, and scattered enough, were these abbeys, so as in no degree to disturb the deep solitude of the region; yet many enough to spread a network or awning of Christian sanctity over what else might have seemed a heathen wilderness. This sort of religious talisman being secured, a man the most afraid of ghosts (like myself, suppose, or the reader) becomes armed into courage to wander for days in

their sylvan recesses. The mountains of the Vosges, on the eastern frontier of France, have never attracted much notice from Europe, except in 1813-14 for a few brief months, when they fell within Napoleon's line of defense against the Allies. But they are interesting for this among other features, that they do not, like some loftier ranges, repel woods; the forests and the hills are on sociable terms. "Live and let live" is their motto. For this reason, in part, these tracts in Lorraine were a favorite hunting-ground with the Carolingian princes. About six hundred years before Joanna's childhood, Charlemagne was known to have hunted there. That, of itself, was a grand incident in the traditions of a forest or a chase. In these vast forests, also, were to be found (if anywhere to be found) those mysterious fawns that tempted solitary hunters into visionary and perilous pursuits. Here was seen (if anywhere seen) that ancient stag who was already nine hundred years old, but possibly a hundred or two more, when met by Charlemagne; and the thing was put beyond doubt by the inscription upon his golden collar. I believe Charlemagne knighted the stag; and, if ever he is met again by a king, he ought to be made an earl, or, being upon the marches of France, a marquis. Observe, I don't absolutely vouch for all these things: my own opinion varies. On a fine breezy afternoon I am audaciously skeptical; but as twilight sets in my credulity grows steadily, till it becomes equal to anything that could be desired. And I have heard candid sportsmen

declare that, outside of these very forests, they laughed loudly at all the dim tales connected with their haunted solitudes, but, on reaching a spot notoriously eighteen miles deep within them, they agreed with Sir Roger de Coverley that a good deal 5 might be said on both sides.

Such traditions, or any others that (like the stag) connect distant generations with each other, are, for that cause, sublime; and the sense of the shadowy, connected with such appearances that reveal 10 themselves or not according to circumstances, leaves a coloring of sanctity over ancient forests, even in those minds that utterly reject the legend as a fact.

But, apart from all distinct stories of that order, in any solitary frontier between two great empires — 15 as here, for instance, or in the desert between Syria and the Euphrates — there is an inevitable tendency, in minds of any deep sensibility, to people the solitudes with phantom images of powers that were of old so vast. Joanna, therefore, in her quiet occupa- 20 tion of a shepherdess, would be led continually to brood over the political condition of her country by the traditions of the past no less than by the mementoes of the local present.

M. Michelet, indeed, says that La Pucelle was *not* 25 a shepherdess. I beg his pardon; she *was*. What he rests upon I guess pretty well: it is the evidence of a woman called Haumette, the most confidential friend of Joanna. Now, she is a good witness, and a good girl, and I like her; for she makes a natural 30 and affectionate report of Joanna's ordinary life.

But still, however good she may be as a witness, Joanna is better; and she, when speaking to the dauphin, calls herself in the Latin report *Bergereta*. Even Haumette confesses that Joanna tended sheep
5 in her girlhood. And I believe that, if Miss Haumette were taking coffee along with me this very evening (February 12, 1847) — in which there would be no subject for scandal or for maiden blushes, because I am an intense philosopher, and Miss H. would
10 be hard upon 450 years old — she would admit the following comment upon her evidence to be right. A Frenchman, about forty years ago — M. Simond, in his “Travels” — mentions accidentally the following hideous scene as one steadily observed and
15 watched by himself in chivalrous France not very long before the French Revolution: A peasant was plowing; and the team that drew his plow was a donkey and a woman. Both were regularly harnessed; both pulled alike. This is bad enough;
20 but the Frenchman adds that, in distributing his lashes, the peasant was obviously desirous of being impartial; or, if either of the yokefellows had a right to complain, certainly it was not the donkey. Now, in any country where such degradation of females
25 could be tolerated by the state of manners, a woman of delicacy would shrink from acknowledging, either for herself or her friend, that she had ever been addicted to any mode of labor not strictly domestic; because, if once owning herself a prædial servant,
30 she would be sensible that this confession extended by probability in the hearer’s thoughts to the having

incurred indignities of this horrible kind. Hau-
mette clearly thinks it more dignified for Joanna to
have been darning the stockings of her horny-hoofed
father, M. D'Arc, than keeping sheep, lest she might
then be suspected of having ever done something 5
worse. But, luckily, there was no danger of *that*:
Joanna never was in service; and my opinion is that
her father should have mended his own stockings,
since probably he was the party to make the holes
in them, as many a better man than D'Arc does — 10
meaning by *that* not myself, because, though prob-
ably a better man than D'Arc, I protest against
doing anything of the kind. If I lived even with
Friday in Juan Fernandez, either Friday must do
all the darning, or else it must go undone. The 15
better men that I meant were the sailors in the
British navy, every man of whom mends his own
stockings. Who else is to do it? Do you suppose,
reader, that the junior lords of the admiralty are
under articles to darn for the navy? 20

The reason, meantime, for my systematic hatred
of D'Arc is this: There was a story current in France
before the Revolution, framed to ridicule the pauper
aristocracy, who happened to have long pedigrees
and short rent rolls: viz., that a head of such a 25
house, dating from the Crusades, was overheard say-
ing to his son, a Chevalier of St. Louis, "*Chevalier,*
as-tu donné au cochon à manger ?" Now, it is clearly
made out by the surviving evidence that D'Arc
would much have preferred continuing to say, "*Ma 30*
filles, as-tu donné au cochon à manger ?" to saying,

"*Pucelle d'Orleans, as-tu sauvé les fleurs-de-lys ?*"

There is an old English copy of verses which argues thus:

5 "If the man that turnips cries
 Cry not when his father dies,
 Then 'tis plain the man had rather
 Have a turnip than his father."

I cannot say that the logic of these verses was ever *entirely* to my satisfaction. I do not see my way
 10 through it as clearly as could be wished. But I see my way most clearly through D'Arc; and the result is — that he would greatly have preferred not merely a turnip to his father, but the saving a pound or so of bacon to saving the Oriflamme of France.

15 It is probable (as M. Michelet suggests) that the title of Virgin or Pucelle had in itself, and apart from the miraculous stories about her, a secret power over the rude soldiery and partisan chiefs of that period; for in such a person they saw a representative
 20 manifestation of the Virgin Mary, who, in a course of centuries, had grown steadily upon the popular heart.

As to Joanna's supernatural detection of the dauphin (Charles VII) among three hundred lords
 25 and knights, I am surprised at the credulity which could ever lend itself to that theatrical juggle. Who admires more than myself the sublime enthusiasm, the rapturous faith in herself, of this pure creature? But I am far from admiring stage artifices which not
 30 La Pucelle, but the court, must have arranged; nor can surrender myself to the conjurer's legerdemain,

such as may be seen every day for a shilling. Southey's "Joan of Arc" was published in 1796. Twenty years after, talking with Southey, I was surprised to find him still owning a secret bias in favor of Joan, founded on her detection of the dauphin. The story, 5 for the benefit of the reader new to the case, was this: La Pucelle was first made known to the dauphin, and presented to his court, at Chinon; and here came her first trial. By way of testing her supernatural pretensions, she was to find out the royal personage 10 amongst the whole ark of clean and unclean creatures. Failing in this *coup d'essai*, she would not simply disappoint many a beating heart in the glittering crowd that on different motives yearned for her success, but she would ruin herself, and, as the 15 oracle within had told her, would, by ruining herself, ruin France. Our own Sovereign Lady Victoria rehearses annually a trial not so severe in degree, but the same in kind. She "pricks" for sheriffs. Joanna pricked for a king. But observe the differ- 20 ence: our own Lady pricks for two men out of three; Joanna for one man out of three hundred. Happy Lady of the Islands and the Orient! — she *can* go astray in her choice only by one-half: to the extent of one-half she *must* have the satisfaction of being 25 right. And yet, even with these tight limits to the misery of a boundless discretion, permit me, Liege Lady, with all loyalty, to submit that now and then you prick with your pin the wrong man. But the poor child from Domrémy, shrinking under the gaze 30 of a dazzling court — not *because* dazzling (for in

out the oil from the sacred ampulla, what advantage was yet open to him by celerity above his competitor, the English boy? Now was to be a race for a coronation: he that should win *that* race carried the superstition of France along with him: he that 5 should first be drawn from the ovens of Rheims was under that superstition baked into a king.

La Pucelle, before she could be allowed to practice as a warrior, was put through her manual and platoon exercise, as a pupil in divinity, at the bar of 10 six eminent men in wigs. According to Southey (v. 393, bk. iii., in the original edition of his "Joan of Arc,") she "appalled the doctors." It's not easy to do *that*: but they had some reason to feel bothered, as that surgeon would assuredly feel bothered 15 who, upon proceeding to dissect a subject, should find the subject retaliating as a dissector upon himself, especially if Joanna ever made the speech to them which occupies v. 354-391, bk. iii. It is a double impossibility: 1st, because a piracy from 20 Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation" — a piracy *a parte ante*, and by three centuries; 2d, it is quite contrary to the evidence on Joanna's trial. Southey's "Joan" of A.D. 1796 (Cottle, Bristol) tells the doctors, among other secrets, that 25 she never in her life attended — 1st, Mass; nor 2d, the Sacramental Table; nor 3d, Confession. In the meantime, all this deistical confession of Joanna's, besides being suicidal for the interest of her cause, is opposed to the depositions upon *both* trials. The 30 very best witness called from first to last deposes that

Joanna attended these rites of her Church even too often; was taxed with doing so; and, by blushing, owned the charge as a fact, though certainly not as a fault. Joanna was a girl of natural piety, that saw
5 God in forests and hills and fountains, but did not the less seek him in chapels and consecrated oratories.

This peasant girl was self-educated through her own natural meditateness. If the reader turns to that divine passage in "Paradise Regained"
10 which Milton has put into the mouth of our Saviour when first entering the wilderness, and musing upon the tendency of those great impulses growing within himself —

15 " Oh, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compared !
When I was yet a child, no childish play
20 To me was pleasing ; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,
What might be public good ; myself I thought
Born to that end —— "

he will have some notion of the vast reveries which
25 brooded over the heart of Joanna in early girlhood, when the wings were budding that should carry her from Orléans to Rheims; when the golden chariot was dimly revealing itself that should carry her from the kingdom of *France Delivered* to the Eternal
30 Kingdom.

It is not requisite for the honor of Joanna, nor is there in this place room, to pursue her brief career

of *action*. That, though wonderful, forms the earthly part of her story; the spiritual part is the saintly passion of her imprisonment, trial, and execution. It is unfortunate, therefore, for Southey's "Joan of Arc" (which, however, should always be 5 regarded as a *juvenile* effort), that precisely when her real glory begins the poem ends. But this limitation of the interest grew, no doubt, from the constraint inseparably attached to the law of epic unity. Joanna's history bisects into two opposite hemi-10 spheres, and both could not have been presented to the eye in one poem, unless by sacrificing all unity of theme, or else by involving the earlier half, as a narrative episode, in the latter; which, however, might have been done, for it might have been com-15 municated to a fellow-prisoner, or a confessor, by Joanna herself. It is sufficient, as concerns *this* section of Joanna's life, to say that she fulfilled, to the height of her promises, the restoration of the prostrate throne. France had become a province 20 of England, and for the ruin of both, if such a yoke could be maintained. Dreadful pecuniary exhaustion caused the English energy to droop; and that critical opening La Pucelle used with a corresponding felicity of audacity and suddenness (that were in 25 themselves portentous) for introducing the wedge of French native resources, for rekindling the national pride, and for planting the dauphin once more upon his feet. When Joanna appeared, he had been on the point of giving up the struggle with the Eng-30 lish, distressed as they were, and of flying to the

south of France. She taught him to blush for such abject counsels. She liberated Orléans, that great city, so decisive by its fate for the issue of the war, and then beleaguered by the English with an elaborate application of engineering skill unprecedented in Europe. Entering the city after sunset on the 29th of April, she sang mass on Sunday, May 8th, for the entire disappearance of the besieging force. On the 29th of June she fought and gained over the English the decisive battle of Patay; on the 9th of July she took Troyes by a *coup-de-main* from a mixed garrison of English and Burgundians; on the 15th of that month she carried the dauphin into Rheims; on Sunday the 17th she crowned him; and there she rested from her labor of triumph. All that was to be *done* she had now accomplished; what remained was — to *suffer*.

All this forward movement was her own; excepting one man, the whole council was against her. Her enemies were all that drew power from earth. Her supporters were her own strong enthusiasm, and the headlong contagion by which she carried this sublime frenzy into the hearts of women, of soldiers, and of all who lived by labor. Henceforward she was thwarted; and the worst error that she committed was to lend the sanction of her presence to counsels which she had ceased to approve. But she had now accomplished the capital objects which her own visions had dictated. These involved all the rest. Errors were now less important; and doubtless it had now become more diffi-

cult for herself to pronounce authentically what *were* errors. The noble girl had achieved, as by a rapture of motion, the capital end of clearing out a free space around her sovereign, giving him the power to move his arms with effect, and, secondly, 5 the inappreciable end of winning for that sovereign what seemed to all France the heavenly ratification of his rights, by crowning him with the ancient solemnities. She had made it impossible for the English now to step before her. They were caught 10 in an irretrievable blunder, owing partly to discord among the uncles of Henry VI, partly to a want of funds, but partly to the very impossibility which they believed to press with tenfold force upon any French attempt to forestall theirs. They laughed 15 at such a thought; and, while they laughed, she *did* it. Henceforth the single redress for the English of this capital oversight, but which never *could* have redressed it effectually, was to vitiate and taint the coronation of Charles VII as the work of a witch. 20 That policy, and not malice (as M. Michelet is so happy to believe), was the moving principle in the subsequent prosecution of Joanna. Unless they unhinged the force of the first coronation in the popular mind by associating it with power given from hell, 25 they felt that the scepter of the invader was broken.

But she, the child that, at nineteen, had wrought wonders so great for France, was she not elated? Did she not lose, as men so often *have* lost, all sobriety of mind when standing upon the pinnacle 30 of success so giddy? Let her enemies declare.

During the progress of her movement, and in the center of ferocious struggles, she had manifested the temper of her feelings by the pity which she had everywhere expressed for the suffering enemy.

5 She forwarded to the English leaders a touching invitation to unite with the French, as brothers, in a common crusade against infidels — thus opening the road for a soldierly retreat. She interposed to protect the captive or the wounded; she mourned over

10 the excesses of her countrymen; she threw herself off her horse to kneel by the dying English soldier and to comfort him with such ministrations, physical or spiritual, as his situation allowed. “Nolebat,” says the evidence, “uti ense suo, aut quemquam

15 interficere.” She sheltered the English that invoked her aid in her own quarters. She wept as she beheld, stretched on the field of battle, so many brave enemies that had died without confession. And, as regarded herself, her elation expressed it-

20 self thus: on the day when she had finished her work, she wept; for she knew that, when her *triumphal* task was done, her end must be approaching. Her aspirations pointed only to a place which seemed to her more than usually full of natural piety, as one

25 in which it would give her pleasure to die. And she uttered, between smiles and tears, as a wish that inexpressibly fascinated her heart, and yet was half fantastic, a broken prayer that God would return her to the solitudes from which he had drawn her,

30 and suffer her to become a shepherdess once more. It was a natural prayer, because nature has laid a

necessity upon every human heart to seek for rest and to shrink from torment. Yet, again, it was a half-fantastic prayer, because, from childhood upward, visions that she had no power to mistrust, and the voices which sounded in her ear forever, 5 had long since persuaded her mind that for *her* no such prayer could be granted. Too well she felt that her mission must be worked out to the end, and that the end was now at hand. All went wrong from this time. She herself had created the *funds* 10 out of which the French restoration should grow; but she was not suffered to witness their development or their prosperous application. More than one military plan was entered upon which she did not approve. But she still continued to expose her 15 person as before. Severe wounds had not taught her caution. And at length, in a sortie from Compiègne (whether through treacherous collusion on the part of her own friends is doubtful to this day), she was made prisoner by the Burgundians, and 20 finally surrendered to the English.

Now came her trial. This trial, moving of course under English influence, was conducted in chief by the Bishop of Beauvais. He was a Frenchman, sold to English interests, and hoping, by favor of the 25 English leaders, to reach the highest preferment. "Bishop that art, Archbishop that shalt be, Cardinal that mayest be," were the words that sounded continually in his ear; and doubtless a whisper of visions still higher, of a triple crown, and feet upon 30 the necks of kings, sometimes stole into his heart.

M. Michelet is anxious to keep us in mind that this bishop was but an agent of the English. True. But it does not better the case for his countryman that, being an accomplice in the crime, making himself
5 the leader in the persecution against the helpless girl, he was willing to be all this in the spirit, and with the conscious vileness of a cat's-paw. Never from the foundations of the earth was there such a trial as this, if it were laid open in all its beauty of defense and
10 all its hellishness of attack. Oh, child of France! shepherdess, peasant girl! trodden under foot by all around thee, how I honor thy flashing intellect, quick as God's lightning, and true as God's lightning to its mark, that ran before France and laggard
15 Europe by many a century, confounding the malice of the ensnarer, and making dumb the oracles of falsehood! Is it not scandalous, is it not humiliating to civilization, that, even at this day, France exhibits the horrid spectacle of judges examining
20 the prisoner against himself; seducing him, by fraud, into treacherous conclusions against his own head; using the terrors of their power for extorting confessions from the frailty of hope; nay (which is worse), using the blandishments of condescension and snaky
25 kindness for thawing into compliances of gratitude those whom they had failed to freeze into terror? Wicked judges! barbarian jurisprudence! — that, sitting in your own conceit on the summits of social wisdom, have yet failed to learn the first principles
30 of criminal justice — sit ye humbly and with docility at the feet of this girl from Domrémy, that tore your

webs of cruelty into shreds and dust. "Would you examine me as a witness against myself?" was the question by which many times she defied their arts. Continually she showed that their interrogations were irrelevant to any business before the court, 5 or that entered into the ridiculous charges against her. General questions were proposed to her on points of casuistical divinity; two-edged questions, which not one of themselves could have answered, without, on the one side, landing himself 10 in heresy (as then interpreted), or, on the other, in some presumptuous expression of self-esteem. Next came a wretched Dominican, that pressed her with an objection, which, if applied to the Bible, would tax every one of its miracles with unsoundness. 15 The monk had the excuse of never having read the Bible. M. Michelet has no such excuse; and it makes one blush for him, as a philosopher, to find him describing such an argument as "weighty," whereas it is but a varied expression of rude Mahome- 20 tan metaphysics. Her answer to this, if there were room to place the whole in a clear light, was as shattering as it was rapid. Another thought to entrap her by asking what language the angelic visitors of her solitude had talked — as though heavenly 25 counsels could want polyglot interpreters for every word, or that God needed language at all in whispering thoughts to a human heart. Then came a worse devil, who asked her whether the Archangel Michael had appeared naked. Not comprehending 30 the vile insinuation, Joanna, whose poverty sug-

gested to her simplicity that it might be the *costliness* of suitable robes which caused the demur, asked them if they fancied God, who clothed the flowers of the valleys, unable to find raiment for his servants.

5 The answer of Joanna moves a smile of tenderness, but the disappointment of her judges makes one laugh exultingly. Others succeeded by troops, who upbraided her with leaving her father; as if that greater Father, whom she believed herself
10 to have been serving, did not retain the power of dispensing with his own rules, or had not said that for a less cause than martyrdom man and woman should leave both father and mother.

On Easter Sunday, when the trial had been long
15 proceeding, the poor girl fell so ill as to cause a belief that she had been poisoned. It was not poison. Nobody had any interest in hastening a death so certain. M. Michelet, whose sympathies with all feelings are so quick that one would gladly see them
20 always as justly directed, reads the case most truly. Joanna had a twofold malady. She was visited by a paroxysm of the complaint called *homesickness*. The cruel nature of her imprisonment, and its length, could not but point her solitary thoughts, in darkness
25 and in chains (for chained she was), to Domrémy. And the season, which was the most heavenly period of the spring, added stings to this yearning. That was one of her maladies — *nostalgia*, as medicine calls it; the other was weariness and exhaus-
30 tion from daily combats with malice. She saw that everybody hated her and thirsted for her blood;

nay, many kind-hearted creatures that would have pitied her profoundly, as regarded all political charges, had their natural feelings warped by the belief that she had dealings with fiendish powers. She knew she was to die; that was *not* the misery! 5 the misery was that this consummation could not be reached without so much intermediate strife, as if she were contending for some chance (where chance was none) of happiness, or were dreaming for a moment of escaping the inevitable. Why, then, *did* 10 she contend? Knowing that she would reap nothing from answering her persecutors, why did she not retire by silence from the superfluous contest? It was because her quick and eager loyalty to truth would not suffer her to see it darkened by frauds 15 which *she* could expose, but others, even of candid listeners, perhaps, could not; it was through that imperishable grandeur of soul which taught her to submit meekly and without a struggle to her punishment, but taught her *not* to submit — no, not for a 20 moment — to calumny as to facts, or to misconstruction as to motives. Besides, there were secretaries all around the court taking down her words. That was meant for no good to *her*. But the end does not always correspond to the meaning. And Joanna 25 might say to herself, “These words that will be used against me to-morrow and the next day, perhaps, in some nobler generation, may rise again for justification.” Yes, Joanna, they *are* rising even now in Paris, and for more than justification! 30

Woman, sister, there are some things which you do

not execute as well as your brother, man; no, nor ever will. Pardon me if I doubt whether you will ever produce a great poet from your choirs, or a Mozart, or a Phidias, or a Michael Angelo, or a great
5 philosopher, or a great scholar. By which last is meant — not one who depends simply on an infinite memory, but also on an infinite and electrical power of combination; bringing together from the four winds, like the angel of the resurrection, what
10 else were dust from dead men's bones, into the unity of breathing life. If you *can* create yourselves into any of these great creators, why have you not?

Yet, sister woman, though I cannot consent to find a Mozart or a Michael Angelo in your sex,
15 cheerfully, and with the love that burns in depths of admiration, I acknowledge that you can do one thing as well as the best of us men — a greater thing than even Milton is known to have done, or Michael Angelo; you can die grandly, and as god-
20 desses would die, were goddesses mortal. If any distant worlds (which *may* be the case) are so far ahead of us Tellurians in optical resources as to see distinctly through their telescopes all that we do on earth, what is the grandest sight to which we
25 ever treat them? St. Peter's at Rome, do you fancy, on Easter Sunday, or Luxor, or perhaps the Himalayas? Oh, no! my friend; suggest something better; these are baubles to them; they see in other worlds, in their own, far better toys of the
30 same kind. These, take my word for it, are nothing. Do you give it up? The finest thing, then, we have

to show them is a scaffold on the morning of execution. I assure you there is a strong muster in those far telescopic worlds, on any such morning, of those who happen to find themselves occupying the right hemisphere for a peep at *us*. How, then, 5 if it be announced in some such telescopic world by those who make a livelihood of catching glimpses at our newspapers, whose language they have long since deciphered, that the poor victim in the morning's sacrifice is a woman? How, if it be published 10 in that distant world that the sufferer wears upon her head in the eyes of many, the garlands of martyrdom? How, if it should be some Marie Antoinette, the widowed queen, coming forward on the scaffold, and presenting to the morning air her 15 head, turned gray by sorrow — daughter of Cæsars kneeling down humbly to kiss the guillotine, as one that worships death? How, if it were the noble Charlotte Corday, that in the bloom of youth, that with the loveliest of persons, that with homage 20 waiting upon her smiles wherever she turned her face to scatter them — homage that followed those smiles as surely as the carols of birds, after showers in spring, follow the reappearing sun and the racing of sunbeams over the hills — yet thought all these 25 things cheaper than the dust upon her sandals, in comparison of deliverance from hell for her dear suffering France! Ah! these were spectacles indeed for those sympathizing people in distant worlds; and some, perhaps, would suffer a sort of martyr- 30 dom themselves, because they could not testify

their wrath, could not bear witness to the strength of love and to the fury of hatred that burned within them at such scenes, could not gather into golden urns some of that glorious dust which rested in the 5 catacombs of earth.

On the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday in 1431, being then about nineteen years of age, the Maid of Arc underwent her martyrdom. She was conducted before mid-day, guarded by eight hundred 10 spearmen, to a platform of prodigious height, constructed of wooden billets supported by occasional walls of lath and plaster, and traversed by hollow spaces in every direction for the creation of air currents. The pile "struck terror," says M. Miche- 15 let, "by its height"; and, as usual, the English purpose in this is viewed as one of pure malignity. But there are two ways of explaining all that. It is probable that the purpose was merciful. On the circumstances of the execution I shall not linger. 20 Yet, to mark the almost fatal felicity of M. Michelet in finding out whatever may injure the English name, at a moment when every reader will be interested in Joanna's personal appearance, it is really edifying to notice the ingenuity by which he draws 25 into light from a dark corner a very unjust account of it, and neglects, though lying upon the highroad, a very pleasing one. Both are from English pens. Grafton, a chronicler, but little read, being a stiff-necked John Bull, thought fit to say that no wonder 30 Joanna should be a virgin, since her "foule face" was a satisfactory solution of that particular merit.

Holinshead, on the other hand, a chronicler somewhat later, every way more important, and at one time universally read, has given a very pleasing testimony to the interesting character of Joanna's person and engaging manners. Neither of these 5 men lived till the following century, so that personally this evidence is none at all. Grafton sullenly and carelessly believed as he wished to believe; Holinshead took pains to inquire, and reports undoubtedly the general impression of France. But I cite the 10 case as illustrating M. Michelet's candor.¹

¹ Amongst the many ebullitions of M. Michelet's fury against us poor English are four which will be likely to amuse the reader; and they are the more conspicuous in collision with the justice which he sometimes does us, and the very indignant admiration which, under some aspects, he grants to us.

1. Our English literature he admires with some gnashing of teeth. He pronounces it "fine and somber," but, I lament to add, "skeptical, Judaic, Satanic—in a word, antichristian." That Lord Byron should figure as a member of this diabolical corporation will not surprise men. It *will* surprise them to hear that Milton is one of its Satanic leaders. Many are the generous and eloquent Frenchmen, besides Chateaubriand, who have, in the course of the last thirty years, nobly suspended their own burning nationality, in order to render a more rapturous homage at the feet of Milton; and some of them have raised Milton almost to a level with angelic natures. Not one of them has thought of looking for him *below* the earth. As to Shakspeare, M. Michelet detects in him a most extraordinary mare's nest. It is this: he does "not recollect to have seen the name of God" in any part of his works. On reading such words, it is natural to rub one's eyes, and suspect that all one has ever seen in this world may have been a pure ocular delusion. In particular, I begin myself to suspect that the word "*la gloire*" never occurs in any Parisian journal. "The great English nation," says M. Michelet, "has one immense profound vice"—to wit, "pride." Why, really, that may be true; but we have a neighbor not absolutely clear of an "immense profound vice," as like ours in color and shape as cherry to cherry. In short, M. Michelet thinks us, by fits and starts, admirable—

The circumstantial incidents of the execution, unless with more space than I can now command, I should be unwilling to relate. I should fear to injure, by imperfect report, a martyrdom which
 5 to myself appears so unspeakably grand. Yet, for a purpose, pointing not at Joanna, but at M. Michelet — viz., to convince him that an English-

only that we are detestable ; and he would adore some of our authors, were it not that so intensely he could have wished to kick them.

2. M. Michelet thinks to lodge an arrow in our sides by a very odd remark upon Thomas à Kempis : which is, that a man of any conceivable European blood — a Finlander, suppose, or a Zantiote — might have written Tom ; only not an Englishman. Whether an Englishman could have forged Tom must remain a matter of doubt, unless the thing had been tried long ago. That problem was intercepted forever by Tom's perverseness in choosing to manufacture himself. Yet, since nobody is better aware than M. Michelet that this very point of Kempis *having* manufactured Kempis is furiously and hopelessly litigated, three or four nations claiming to have forged his work for him, the shocking old doubt will raise its snaky head once more — whether this forger, who rests in so much darkness, might not, after all, be of English blood. Tom, it may be feared, is known to modern English literature chiefly by an irreverent mention of his name in a line of Peter PiNDAR's (Dr. Wolcot) fifty years back, where he is described as

" Kempis Tom,
 Who clearly shows the way to Kingdom Come."

Few in these days can have read him, unless in the Methodist version of John Wesley. Among those few, however, happens to be myself ; which arose from the accident of having, when a boy of eleven, received a copy of the "*De Imitatione Christi*" as a bequest from a relation who died very young ; from which cause, and from the external prettiness of the book — being a Glasgow reprint by the celebrated Foulis, and gayly bound — I was induced to look into it, and finally read it many times over, partly out of some sympathy which, even in those days, I had with its simplicity and devotional fervor, but much more from the savage delight I found in laughing at Tom's Latinity. *That*, I freely grant to M. Michelet

man is capable of thinking more highly of La Pucelle than even her admiring countrymen — I shall, in parting, allude to one or two traits in Joanna's demeanor on the scaffold, and to one or two in that of the bystanders, which authorize 5 me in questioning an opinion of his upon this martyr's firmness. The reader ought to be reminded

is inimitable. Yet, after all, it is not certain whether the original *was* Latin. But, however *that* may have been, if it is possible that M. Michelet * can be accurate in saying that there are no less than *sixty* French versions (not editions, observe, but separate versions) existing of the "De Imitatione," how prodigious must have been the adaptation of the book to the religious heart of the fifteenth century! Excepting the Bible, but excepting *that* only in Protestant lands, no book known to man has had the same distinction. It is the most marvelous bibliographical fact on record.

3. Our English girls, it seems, are as faulty in one way as we English males in another. None of us men could have written the *Opera Omnia* of Mr. à Kempis; neither could any of our girls have assumed male attire like La Pucelle. But why? Because, says Michelet, English girls and German think so much of an indecorum. Well, that is a good fault, generally speaking. But M. Michelet ought to have remembered a fact in the martyrologies which justifies both parties — the French heroine for doing, and the general choir of English girls for *not* doing. A female saint, specially renowned in France, had, for a reason as weighty as Joanna's — viz., expressly to shield her modesty among men — worn a male military harness. That reason and that example authorized La Pucelle; but our English girls, as a body, have seldom any such

* "*If M. Michelet can be accurate*": — However, on consideration, this statement does not depend on Michelet. The bibliographer Barbier has absolutely *specified* sixty in a separate dissertation, *soixante traductions*, among those even that have not escaped the search. The Italian translations are said to be thirty. As to mere *editions*, not counting the early MSS. for half a century before printing was introduced, those in Latin amount to 2000, and those in French to 1000. Meantime, it is very clear to me that this astonishing popularity, so entirely unparalleled in literature, could not have existed except in Roman Catholic times, nor subsequently have lingered in any Protestant land. It was the denial of Scripture fountains to thirsty lands which made this slender rill of Scripture truth so passionately welcome.

that Joanna D'Arc was subjected to an unusually unfair trial of opinion. Any of the elder Christian martyrs had not much to fear of *personal* rancor. The martyr was chiefly regarded as the enemy of
 5 Cæsar; at times, also, where any knowledge of

reason, and certainly no such saintly example, to plead. This excuses *them*. Yet, still, if it is indispensable to the national character that our young women should now and then trespass over the frontier of decorum, it then becomes a patriotic duty in me to assure M. Michelet that we *have* such ardent females among us, and in a long series; some detected in naval hospitals when too sick to remember their disguise; some on fields of battle; multitudes never detected at all; some only suspected; and others discharged without noise by war officers and other absurd people. In our navy, both royal and commercial, and generally from deep remembrances of slighted love, women have sometimes served in disguise for many years, taking contentedly their daily allowance of burgoo, biscuit, or cannon-balls — anything, in short, digestible or indigestible, that it might please Providence to send. One thing, at least, is to their credit: never any of these poor masks, with their deep silent remembrances, have been detected through murmuring, or what is nautically understood by “skulking.” So, for once, M. Michelet has an *erratum* to enter upon the fly-leaf of his book in presentation copies.

4. But the last of these ebullitions is the most lively. We English, at Orleans, and after Orleans (which is not quite so extraordinary, if all were told), fled before the Maid of Arc. Yes, says M. Michelet, you *did*: deny it, if you can. Deny it, *mon cher*? I don't mean to deny it. Running away, in many cases, is a thing so excellent that no philosopher would, at times, condescend to adopt any other step. All of us nations in Europe, without one exception, have shown our philosophy in that way at times. Even people “*qui ne se rendent pas*” have deigned both to run and to shout, “*Sauve qui peut!*” at odd times of sunset; though for my part, I have no pleasure in recalling unpleasant remembrances to brave men; and yet, really, being so philosophic, they ought *not* to be unpleasant. But the amusing feature in M. Michelet's reproach is the way in which he *improves* and varies against us the charge of running, as if he were singing a catch. Listen to him: They “*showed their backs*,” did these English. (Hip, hip, hurrah! three times three!) “*Behind good walls they let themselves be taken.*”

the Christian faith and morals existed, with the enmity that arises spontaneously in the world against the spiritual. But the martyr, though disloyal, was not supposed to be therefore anti-national; and still less was *individually* hateful. 5 What was hated (if anything) belonged to his class, not to himself separately. Now, Joanna, if hated at all, was hated personally, and in Rouen on national grounds. Hence there would be a certainty of calumny arising against *her* such as would not 10 affect martyrs in general. That being the case, it would follow of necessity that some people would impute to her a willingness to recant. No innocence could escape *that*. Now, had she really testified this willingness on the scaffold, it would have 15 argued nothing at all but the weakness of a genial nature shrinking from the instant approach of torment. And those will often pity that weakness most who, in their own persons, would yield to it least. Meantime, there never was a calumny 20

(Hip, hip! nine times nine!) They "*ran as fast as their legs could carry them.*" (Hurrah! twenty-seven times twenty-seven!) They "*ran before a girl*"; they did. (Hurrah! eighty-one times eighty-one!) This reminds one of criminal indictments on the old model in English courts, where (for fear the prisoner should escape) the crown lawyer varied the charge perhaps through forty counts. The law laid its guns so as to rake the accused at every possible angle. While the indictment was reading, he seemed a monster of crime in his own eyes; and yet, after all, the poor fellow had but committed one offence, and not always *that*. N.B. — Not having the French original at hand, I make my quotations from a friend's copy of Mr. Walter Kelly's translation; which seems to me faithful, spirited, and idiomatically English — liable, in fact, only to the single reproach of occasional provincialisms.

uttered that drew less support from the recorded circumstances. It rests upon no *positive* testimony, and it has a weight of contradicting testimony to stem. And yet, strange to say, M. Michelet, who
5 at times seems to admire the Maid of Arc as much as I do, is the one sole writer among her *friends* who lends some countenance to this odious slander. His words are that, if she did not utter this word
· *recant* with her lips, she uttered it in her heart.
10 “Whether she *said* the word is uncertain; but I affirm that she *thought* it.”

Now, I affirm that she did not; not in any sense of the word “*thought*” applicable to the case. Here is France calumniating La Pucelle; here is England
15 defending her. M. Michelet can only mean that, on *a priori* principles, every woman must be presumed liable to such a weakness; that Joanna was a woman; *ergo*, that she was liable to such a weakness. That is, he only supposes her to have uttered
20 the word by an argument which presumes it impossible for anybody to have done otherwise. I, on the contrary, throw the onus of the argument not on presumable tendencies of nature, but on the known facts of that morning’s execution, as re-
25 corded by multitudes. What else, I demand, than mere weight of metal, absolute nobility of deportment, broke the vast line of battle then arrayed against her? What else but her meek, saintly demeanor won, from the enemies that till now had
30 believed her a witch, tears of rapturous admiration? “Ten thousand men,” says M. Michelet himself —

“ten thousand men wept”; and of these ten thousand the majority were political enemies knitted together by cords of superstition. What else was it but her constancy, united with her angelic gentleness, that drove the fanatic English soldier—who 5 had sworn to throw a fagot on her scaffold as *his* tribute of abhorrence, that *did* so, that fulfilled his vow—suddenly to turn away a penitent for life, saying everywhere that he had seen a dove rising upon wings to heaven from the ashes where she had 10 stood? What else drove the executioner to kneel at every shrine for pardon to *his* share in the tragedy? And, if all this were insufficient, then I cite the closing act of her life as valid on her behalf, were all other testimonies against her. The executioner had been 15 directed to apply his torch from below. He did so. The fiery smoke rose upward in billowing volumes. A Dominican monk was then standing almost at her side. Wrapped up in his sublime office, he saw not the danger, but still persisted in his prayers. Even 20 then, when the last enemy was racing up the fiery stairs to seize her, even at that moment did this noblest of girls think only for *him*, the one friend that would not forsake her, and not for herself; bidding him with her last breath to care for his own 25 preservation, but to leave her to God. That girl, whose latest breath ascended in this sublime expression of self-oblivion, did not utter the word *recant* either with her lips or in her heart. No; she did not, though one should rise from the dead to swear it. 30

* * * * *

Bishop of Beauvais! thy victim died in fire upon a scaffold — thou upon a down bed. But, for the departing minutes of life, both are oftentimes alike. At the farewell crisis, when the gates of death are opening, and flesh is resting from its struggles, oftentimes the tortured and the torturer have the same truce from carnal torment; both sink together into sleep; together both sometimes kindle into dreams. When the mortal mists were gathering fast upon you two, bishop and shepherd girl — when the pavilions of life were closing up their shadowy curtains about you — let us try, through the gigantic glooms, to decipher the flying features of your separate visions.

15 The shepherd girl that had delivered France — she, from her dungeon, she, from her baiting at the stake, she, from her duel with fire, as she entered her last dream — saw Domrémy, saw the fountain of Domrémy, saw the pomp of the forests in which her childhood had wandered. That Easter festival which man had denied to her languishing heart — that resurrection of springtime, which the darkness of dungeons had intercepted from *her*, hungering after the glorious liberty of forests — were by 25 God given back into her hands as jewels that had been stolen from her by robbers. With those, perhaps (for the minutes of dreams can stretch into ages), was given back to her by God the bliss of childhood. By special privilege for *her* might be 30 created, in this farewell dream, a second childhood, innocent as the first; but not, like *that*, sad with the

gloom of a fearful mission in the rear. This mission had now been fulfilled. The storm was weathered; the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. The hatred to herself in all eyes had been faced steadily, had been suffered, had been survived. And in her last fight upon the scaffold she had triumphed gloriously; victoriously she had tasted the stings of death. For all, except this comfort from her farewell dream, she had died — died amid the tears of ten thousand enemies — died amid the drums and trumpets of armies — died amid peals redoubling upon peals, volleys upon volleys, from the saluting clarions of martyrs.

Bishop of Beauvais! because the guilt-burdened man is in dreams haunted and waylaid by the most frightful of his crimes, and because upon that fluctuating mirror — rising (like the mocking mirrors of *mirage* in Arabian deserts) from the fens of death — most of all are reflected the sweet countenances which the man has laid in ruins; therefore I know, bishop, that you also, entering your final dream, saw Domrémy. That fountain, of which the witnesses spoke so much, showed itself to your eyes in pure morning dew; but neither dew, nor the holy dawn, could cleanse away the bright spots of innocent blood upon its surface. By the fountain, bishop, you saw a woman seated, that hid her face. But, as you draw near, the woman raises

her wasted features. Would Domrémy know them again for the features of her child? Ah, but *you* know them, bishop, well! Oh, mercy! what a groan was *that* which the servants, waiting outside
5 the bishop's dream at his bedside, heard from his laboring heart, as at this moment he turned away from the fountain and the woman, seeking rest in the forests afar off. Yet not *so* to escape the woman, whom once again he must behold before he dies. In
10 the forests to which he prays for pity, will he find a respite? What a tumult, what a gathering of feet is there! In glades where only wild deer should run armies and nations are assembling; towering in the fluctuating crowd are phantoms that belong
15 to departed hours. There is the great English Prince, Regent of France. There is my Lord of Winchester, the princely cardinal, that died and made no sign. There is the bishop of Beauvais, clinging to the shelter of the thickets. What build-
20 ing is that which hands so rapid are raising? Is it a martyr's scaffold? Will they burn the child of Domrémy a second time? No; it is a tribunal that rises to the clouds; and two nations stand around it, waiting for a trial. Shall my Lord of Beauvais
25 sit again upon the judgment-seat, and again number the hours for the innocent? Ah, no! he is the prisoner at the bar. Already all is waiting: the mighty audience is gathered, the Court is hurrying to their seats, the witnesses are arrayed, the trum-
30 pets are sounding, the judge is taking his place. Oh, but this is sudden! My lord, have you no counsel?

“Counsel I have none; in heaven above, or on earth beneath, counselor there is none now that would take a brief from *me*: all are silent.” Is it indeed, come to this? Alas! the time is short, the tumult is wondrous, the crowd stretches away into infinity; 5 but yet I will search in it for somebody to take your brief; I know of somebody that will be your counsel. Who is this that cometh from Domrémy? Who is she in bloody coronation robes from Rheims? Who is she that cometh with blackened flesh from 10 walking the furnaces of Rouen? This is she, the shepherd girl, counselor that had none for herself, whom I choose, bishop, for yours. She it is, I engage, that shall take my lord’s brief. She it is, bishop, that would plead for you; yes, bishop, *she* 15 — when heaven and earth are silent.

THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH

SECTION I — THE GLORY OF MOTION

SOME twenty or more years before I matriculated at Oxford, Mr. Palmer, at that time M.P. for Bath, had accomplished two things, very hard to do on our little planet, the Earth, however cheap they
5 may be held by eccentric people in comets: he had invented mail coaches, and he had married the daughter of a duke. He was, therefore, just twice as great a man as Galileo, who did certainly invent (or, which is the same thing,¹ discover) the satellites
10 of Jupiter, those very next things extant to mail coaches in the two capital pretensions of speed and keeping time, but, on the other hand, who did *not* marry the daughter of a duke.

These mail coaches, as organized by Mr. Palmer,
15 are entitled to a circumstantial notice from myself, having had so large a share in developing the anarchies of my subsequent dreams: an agency which they accomplished, 1st, through velocity at that time unprecedented — for they first revealed
20 the glory of motion; 2dly, through grand effects

¹ “*The same thing*”: — Thus, in the calendar of the Church Festivals, the discovery of the true cross (by Helen, the mother of Constantine) is recorded (and, one might think, with the express consciousness of sarcasm) as the *Invention* of the Cross.

for the eye between lamplight and the darkness upon solitary roads; 3dly, through animal beauty and power so often displayed in the class of horses selected for this mail service; 4thly, through the conscious presence of a central intellect, that, in the midst of vast distances¹ — of storms, of darkness, of danger — overruled all obstacles into one steady coöperation to a national result. For my own feeling, this post-office service spoke as by some mighty orchestra, where a thousand instruments, all disregarding each other, and so far in danger of discord, yet all obedient as slaves to the supreme *baton* of some great leader, terminate in a perfection of harmony like that of heart, brain, and lungs in a healthy animal organization. But, finally, that particular element in this whole combination which most impressed myself, and through which it is that to this hour Mr. Palmer's mail-coach system tyrannizes over my dreams by terror and terrific beauty, lay in the awful *political* mission which at that time it fulfilled. The mail coach it was that distributed over the face of the land, like the opening of apocalyptic vials, the heart-shaking news of Trafalgar, of Salamanca, of Vittoria, of Waterloo. These were the harvests that, in the grandeur of their reaping, redeemed the tears and blood in which they had been sown. Neither was the mean-

¹ "*Vast distances*": — One case was familiar to mail-coach travelers where two mails in opposite directions, north and south, starting at the same minute from points six hundred miles apart, met almost constantly at a particular bridge which bisected the total distance.

est peasant so much below the grandeur and the sorrow of the times as to confound battles such as these, which were gradually molding the destinies of Christendom, with the vulgar conflicts of ordinary warfare, so often no more than gladiatorial trials of national prowess. The victories of England in this stupendous contest rose of themselves as natural *Te Deums* to heaven; and it was felt by the thoughtful that such victories, at such a crisis of general prostration, were not more beneficial to ourselves than finally to France, our enemy, and to the nations of all western or central Europe, through whose pusillanimity it was that the French domination had prospered.

15 The mail coach, as the national organ for publishing these mighty events, thus diffusively influential, became itself a spiritualized and glorified object to an impassioned heart; and naturally, in the Oxford of that day, *all* hearts were impassioned, as being all (or nearly all) in *early* manhood. In most universities there is one single college; in Oxford there were five-and-twenty, all of which were peopled by young men, the *élite* of their own generation; not boys, but men: none under eight-
25 een. In some of these many colleges the custom permitted the student to keep what are called "short terms"; that is, the four terms of Michaelmas, Lent, Easter, and Aet, were kept by a residence, in the aggregate, of ninety-one days, or thirteen
30 weeks. Under this interrupted residence, it was possible that a student might have a reason for

going down to his home four times in the year. This made eight journeys to and fro. But, as these homes lay dispersed through all the shires of the island, and most of us disdained all coaches except his Majesty's mail, no city out of London could pretend to so extensive a connection with Mr. Palmer's establishment as Oxford. Three mails, at the least, I remember as passing every day through Oxford, and benefiting by my personal patronage — viz., the Worcester, the Gloucester, and the Holyhead mail. Naturally, therefore, it became a point of some interest with us, whose journeys revolved every six weeks on an average, to look a little into the executive details of the system. With some of these Mr. Palmer had no concern; they rested upon by-laws enacted by posting-houses for their own benefit, and upon other by-laws, equally stern, enacted by the inside passengers for the illustration of their own haughty exclusiveness. These last were of a nature to rouse our scorn; from which the transition was not very long to systematic mutiny. Up to this time, say 1804, or 1805 (the year of Trafalgar), it had been the fixed assumption of the four inside people (as an old tradition of all public carriages derived from the reign of Charles II) that they, the illustrious quaternion, constituted a porcelain variety of the human race, whose dignity would have been compromised by exchanging one word of civility with the three miserable delf-ware outsides. Even to have kicked an outsider might have been held to

attain the foot concerned in that operation, so that, perhaps, it would have required an act of Parliament to restore its purity of blood. What words, then, could express the horror, and the sense of treason, in that case, which *had* happened, where all three outsiders (the trinity of Pariahs) made a vain attempt to sit down at the same breakfast-table or dinner-table with the consecrated four? I myself witnessed such an attempt; and on that occasion a benevolent old gentleman endeavored to soothe his three holy associates, by suggesting that, if the outsiders were indicted for this criminal attempt at the next assizes, the court would regard it as a case of lunacy or *delirium tremens* rather than of treason. England owes much of her grandeur to the depth of the aristocratic element in her social composition, when pulling against her strong democracy. I am not the man to laugh at it. But sometimes, undoubtedly, it expressed itself in comic shapes. The course taken with the infatuated outsiders, in the particular attempt which I have noticed, was that the waiter, beckoning them away from the privileged *salle-à-manger*, sang out, "This way, my good men," and then enticed these good men away to the kitchen. But that plan had not always answered. Sometimes, though rarely, cases occurred where the intruders, being stronger than usual, or more vicious than usual, resolutely refused to budge, and so far carried their point as to have a separate table arranged for themselves in a corner of the general room. Yet,

if an Indian screen could be found ample enough to plant them out from the very eyes of the high table, or *dais*, it then became possible to assume as a fiction of law that the three delf fellows, after all, were not present. They could be ignored by 5 the porcelain men, under the maxim that objects not appearing and objects not existing are governed by the same logical construction.

Such being, at that time, the usage of mail-coaches, what was to be done by us of young 10 Oxford? We, the most aristocratic of people, who were addicted to the practice of looking down superciliously even upon the insides themselves as often very questionable characters — were we, by voluntarily going outside, to court indignities? 15 If our dress and bearing sheltered us generally from the suspicion of being “raff” (the name at that period for “snobs”¹), we really *were* such constructively by the place we assumed. If we did not submit to the deep shadow of eclipse, we entered 20 at least the skirts of its penumbra. And the analogy of theaters was valid against us, — where no man can complain of the annoyances incident to the pit or gallery, having his instant remedy in paying the higher price of the boxes. But the 25 soundness of this analogy we disputed. In the case of the theater, it cannot be pretended that

¹ “*Snobs*,” and its antithesis, “*nobs*,” arose among the internal factions of shoemakers perhaps ten years later. Possibly enough, the terms may have existed much earlier; but they were then first made known, picturesquely and effectively, by a trial at some assizes which happened to fix the public attention.

the inferior situations have any separate attractions, unless the pit may be supposed to have an advantage for the purposes of the critic or the dramatic reporter. But the critic or reporter is a rarity.
5 For most people, the sole benefit is in the price. Now, on the contrary, the outside of the mail had its own incommunicable advantages. These we could not forego. The higher price we would willingly have paid, but not the price connected with the
10 condition of riding inside; which condition we pronounced insufferable. The air, the freedom of prospect, the proximity to the horses, the elevation of seat: these were what we required; but, above all, the certain anticipation of purchasing occasional
15 opportunities of driving.

Such was the difficulty which pressed us; and under the coercion of this difficulty we instituted a searching inquiry into the true quality and valuation of the different apartments about the mail.
20 We conducted this inquiry on metaphysical principles; and it was ascertained satisfactorily that the roof of the coach, which by some weak men had been called the attics, and by some the garrets, was in reality the drawing-room; in which draw-
25 ing-room the box was the chief ottoman or sofa; whilst it appeared that the *inside*, which had been traditionally regarded as the only room tenantable by gentlemen, was, in fact, the coal cellar in disguise.

30 Great wits jump. The very same idea had not long before struck the celestial intellect of China.

Amongst the presents carried out by our first embassy to that country was a state coach. It had been specially selected as a personal gift by George III; but the exact mode of using it was an intense mystery to Pekin. The ambassador, indeed (Lord 5 Macartney), had made some imperfect explanations upon this point; but, as His Excellency communicated these in a diplomatic whisper at the very moment of his departure, the celestial intellect was very feebly illuminated, and it became necessary 10 to call a cabinet council on the grand state question, "Where was the Emperor to sit?" The hammer-cloth happened to be unusually gorgeous; and, partly on that consideration, but partly also because the box offered the most elevated seat, was nearest 15 to the moon, and undeniably went foremost, it was resolved by acclamation that the box was the imperial throne, and, for the scoundrel who drove — he might sit where he could find a perch. The horses, therefore, being harnessed, solemnly his 20 imperial majesty ascended his new English throne under a flourish of trumpets, having the first lord of the treasury on his right hand, and the chief jester on his left. Pekin gloried in the spectacle; and in the whole flowery people, constructively 25 present by representation, there was but one discontented person, and *that* was the coachman. This mutinous individual audaciously shouted, "Where am *I* to sit?" But the privy council, incensed by his disloyalty, unanimously opened the 30 door, and kicked him into the inside. He had all

the inside places to himself; but such is the rapacity of ambition that he was still dissatisfied. "I say," he cried out in an extempore petition addressed to the Emperor through the window — "I say, how
5 am I to catch hold of the reins?" — "Anyhow," was the imperial answer; "don't trouble *me*, man, in my glory. How catch the reins? Why, through the windows, through the keyholes — *anyhow*." Finally this contumacious coachman lengthened
10 the checkstrings into a sort of jury reins communicating with the horses; with these he drove as steadily as Pekin had any right to expect. The Emperor returned after the briefest of circuits; he descended in great pomp from his throne, with
15 the severest resolution never to remount it. A public thanksgiving was ordered for his majesty's happy escape from the disease of a broken neck; and the state coach was dedicated thenceforward as a votive offering to the god Fo Fo — whom the
20 learned more accurately called Fi Fi.

A revolution of this same Chinese character did young Oxford of that era effect in the constitution of mail-coach society. It was a perfect French Revolution; and we had good reason to say, *ça ira*.
25 In fact, it soon became *too* popular. The "public" — a well-known character, particularly disagreeable, though slightly respectable, and notorious for affecting the chief seats in synagogues — had at first loudly opposed this revolution; but, when
30 the opposition showed itself to be ineffectual, our disagreeable friend went into it with headlong zeal.

At first it was a sort of race between us ; and, as the public is usually from thirty to fifty years old, naturally we of young Oxford, that averaged about twenty, had the advantage. Then the public took to bribing, giving fees to horsekeepers, &c., who 5 hired out their persons as warming pans on the box seat. *That*, you know, was shocking to all moral sensibilities. Come to bribery, said we, and there is an end to all morality, — Aristotle's, Zeno's, Cicero's, or anybody's. And, besides, of what use 10 was it? For *we* bribed also. And, as our bribes, to those of the public, were as five shillings to sixpence, here again young Oxford had the advantage. But the contest was ruinous to the principles of the stables connected with the mails. This whole 15 corporation was constantly bribed, rebribed, and often sur-rebribed; a mail-coach yard was like the hustings in a contested election; and a horsekeeper, ostler, or helper, was held by the philosophical at that time to be the most corrupt character in the 20 nation.

There was an impression upon the public mind, natural enough from the continually augmenting velocity of the mail, but quite erroneous, that an outside seat on this class of carriages was a post of 25 danger. On the contrary, I maintained that, if a man had become nervous from some gypsy prediction in his childhood, allocating to a particular moon now approaching some unknown danger, and he should inquire earnestly, "Whither can I 30 fly for shelter? Is a prison the safest retreat? or

a lunatic hospital? or the British Museum?" I should have replied, "Oh no; I'll tell you what to do. Take lodgings for the next forty days on the box of his Majesty's mail. Nobody can touch you 5 there. If it is by bills at ninety days after date that you are made unhappy — if noters and protesters are the sort of wretches whose astrological shadows darken the house of life — then note you what I vehemently protest: viz., that, no matter 10 though the sheriff and under-sheriff in every county should be running after you with his *posse*, touch a hair of your head he cannot whilst you keep house and have your legal domicile on the box of the mail. It is felony to stop the mail; even the sheriff cannot 15 do that. And an *extra* touch of the whip to the leaders (no great matter if it grazes the sheriff) at any time guarantees your safety." In fact, a bedroom in a quiet house seems a safe enough retreat; yet it is liable to its own notorious nuisances 20 — to robbers by night, to rats, to fire. But the mail laughs at these terrors. To robbers, the answer is packed up and ready for delivery in the barrel of the guard's blunderbuss. Rats again! there *are* none about mail coaches any more than 25 snakes in Von Troil's Iceland;¹ except, indeed, now and then a parliamentary rat, who always hides his shame in what I have shown to be the "coal

¹ "Von Troil's Iceland":—The allusion is to a well-known chapter in Von Troil's work, entitled, "Concerning the Snakes of Iceland." The entire chapter consists of these six words—"There are no snakes in Iceland."

cellar." And, as to fire, I never knew but one in a mail coach; which was in the Exeter mail, and caused by an obstinate sailor bound to Devonport. Jack, making light of the law and the lawgiver that had set their faces against his offense, insisted on 5 taking up a forbidden seat¹ in the rear of the roof, from which he could exchange his own yarns with those of the guard. No greater offense was then known to mail coaches; it was treason, it was *læsa majestas*, it was by tendency arson; and the ashes 10 of Jack's pipe, falling among the straw of the hinder boot, containing the mail bags, raised a flame which (aided by the wind of our motion) threatened a revolution in the republic of letters. Yet even this left the sanctity of the box unviolated. In digni-15

¹ "*Forbidden seat*":—The very sternest code of rules was enforced upon the mail by the Post-office. Throughout England, only three outsides were allowed, of whom one was to sit on the box, and the other two immediately behind the box; none, under any pretext, to come near the guard; an indispensable caution; since else, under the guise of a passenger, a robber might by any one of a thousand advantages—which sometimes are created, but always are favored, by the animation of frank social intercourse—have disarmed the guard. Beyond the Scottish border, the regulation was so far relaxed as to allow of *four* outsides, but not relaxed at all as to the mode of placing them. One, as before, was seated on the box, and the other three on the front of the roof, with a determinate and ample separation from the little insulated chair of the guard. This relaxation was conceded by way of compensating to Scotland her disadvantages in point of population. England, by the superior density of her population, might always count upon a large fund of profits in the fractional trips of chance passengers riding for short distances of two or three stages. In Scotland this chance counted for much less. And therefore, to make good the deficiency, Scotland was allowed a compensatory profit upon one *extra* passenger.

fied repose, the coachman and myself sat on, resting with benign composure upon our knowledge that the fire would have burned its way through four inside passengers before it could reach ourselves. 5 I remarked to the coachman, with a quotation from Virgil's "*Æneid*" really too hackneyed —

"Jam proximus ardet
Ucalegon."

But, recollecting that the Virgilian part of the coach- 10 man's education might have been neglected, I interpreted so far as to say that perhaps at that moment the flames were catching hold of our worthy brother and inside passenger, Ucalegon. The coachman made no answer, — which is my own way when a 15 stranger addresses me either in Syriac or in Coptic; but by his faint skeptical smile he seemed to insinuate that he knew better, — for that Ucalegon, as it happened, was not in the waybill, and therefore could not have been booked.

20 No dignity is perfect which does not at some point ally itself with the mysterious. The connection of the mail with the state and the executive government — a connection obvious, but yet not strictly defined — gave to the whole mail establishment 25 an official grandeur which did us service on the roads, and invested us with seasonable terrors. Not the less impressive were those terrors because their legal limits were imperfectly ascertained. Look at those turnpike gates: with what deferential 30 hurry, with what an obedient start, they fly open

at our approach! Look at that long line of carts and carters ahead, audaciously usurping the very crest of the road. Ah! the traitors, they do not hear us as yet; but, as soon as the dreadful blast of our horn reaches them with proclamation of our approach, see with what frenzy of trepidation they fly to their horses' heads, and deprecate our wrath by the precipitation of their crane-neck quarterings. Treason they feel to be their crime; each individual carter feels himself under the ban of confiscation and attainder; his blood is attainted through six generations; and nothing is wanting but the headsman and his ax, the block and the sawdust, to close up the vista of his horrors. What! shall it be within benefit of clergy to delay the king's message on the high road?—to interrupt the great respirations, ebb and flood, *systole* and *diastole*, of the national intercourse?—to endanger the safety of tidings running day and night between all nations and languages? Or can it be fancied, amongst the weakest of men, that the bodies of the criminals will be given up to their widows for Christian burial? Now, the doubts which were raised as to our powers did more to wrap them in terror, by wrapping them in uncertainty, than could have been effected by the sharpest definitions of the law from the Quarter Sessions. We, on our parts (we, the collective mail, I mean), did our utmost to exalt the idea of our privileges by the insolence with which we wielded them. Whether this insolence rested upon law that gave it a sanction, or upon conscious power

that haughtily dispensed with that sanction, equally it spoke from a potential station; and the agent, in each particular insolence of the moment, was viewed reverentially, as one having authority.

5 Sometimes after breakfast his Majesty's mail would become frisky; and, in its difficult wheelings amongst the intricacies of early markets, it would upset an apple cart, a cart loaded with eggs, &c. Huge was the affliction and dismay, awful was the
 10 smash. I, as far as possible, endeavored in such a case to represent the conscience and moral sensibilities of the mail; and, when wildernesses of eggs were lying poached under horses' hoofs, then would I stretch forth my hands in sorrow, saying (in words
 15 too celebrated at that time, from the false echoes¹ of Marengo), "Ah! wherefore have we not time to weep over you?" — which was evidently impossible, since, in fact, we had not time to laugh over them. Tied to a post-office allowance in some cases
 20 of fifty minutes for eleven miles, could the royal mail pretend to undertake the offices of sympathy and condolence? Could it be expected to provide tears for the accidents of the road? If even it seemed to trample on humanity, it did so, I felt,
 25 in discharge of its own more peremptory duties.

Upholding the morality of the mail, *a fortiori* I

¹ "*False echoes*":—Yes, false! for the words ascribed to Napoleon, as breathed to the memory of Desaix, never were uttered at all. They stand in the same category of theatrical fictions as the cry of the foundering line-of-battle ship *Vengeur*, as the vaunt of General Cambroune at Waterloo, "*La Garde meurt, mais ne se rend pas*," or as the repartees of Talleyrand.

upheld its rights; as a matter of duty, I stretched to the uttermost its privilege of imperial precedency, and astonished weak minds by the feudal powers which I hinted to be lurking constructively in the charters of this proud establishment. Once I re- 5 member being on the box of the Holyhead mail, between Shrewsbury and Oswestry, when a tawdry thing from Birmingham, some "Tallyho" or "High-flyer," all flaunting with green and gold, came up alongside of us. What a contrast to our royal 10 simplicity of form and color in this plebeian wretch! The single ornament on our dark ground of chocolate color was the mighty shield of the imperial arms, but emblazoned in proportions as modest as a signet ring bears to a seal of office. Even this was dis- 15 played only on a single panel, whispering, rather than proclaiming, our relations to the mighty state; whilst the beast from Birmingham, our green-and-gold friend from false, fleeting, perjured Brummagem, had as much writing and painting on its sprawling 20 flanks as would have puzzled a decipherer from the tombs of Luxor. For some time this Birmingham machine ran along by our side — a piece of familiarity that already of itself seemed to me sufficiently jacobinical. But all at once a movement of the 25 horses announced a desperate intention of leaving us behind. "Do you see *that*?" I said to the coachman. — "I see," was his short answer. He was wide awake, — yet he waited longer than seemed prudent; for the horses of our audacious opponent 30 had a disagreeable air of freshness and power. But

his motive was loyal; his wish was that the Birmingham conceit should be full-blown before he froze it. When *that* seemed right, he unloosed, or, to speak by a stronger word, he *sprang*, his known resources: he slipped our royal horses like cheetahs, or hunting leopards, after the affrighted game. How they could retain such a reserve of fiery power after the work they had accomplished seemed hard to explain. But on our side, besides the physical superiority, was a tower of moral strength, namely the king's name, "which they upon the adverse faction wanted." Passing them without an effort, as it seemed, we threw them into the rear with so lengthening an interval between us as proved in itself the bitterest mockery of their presumption; whilst our guard blew back a shattering blast of triumph that was really too painfully full of derision.

I mention this little incident for its connection with what followed. A Welsh rustic, sitting behind me, asked if I had not felt my heart burn within me during the progress of the race? I said, with philosophic calmness, *No*; because we were not racing with a mail, so that no glory could be gained. In fact, it was sufficiently mortifying that such a Birmingham thing should dare to challenge us. The Welshman replied that he didn't see *that*; for that a cat might look at a king, and a Brummagem coach might lawfully race the Holyhead mail. "*Race* us, if you like," I replied, "though even *that* has an air of sedition; but not *beat* us. This would have been treason; and for its own sake I am glad

that the 'Tallyho' was disappointed." So dissatisfied did the Welshman seem with this opinion that at last I was obliged to tell him a very fine story from one of our elder dramatists: viz., that once, in some far Oriental kingdom, when the 5 sultan of all the land, with his princes, ladies, and chief omrahs, were flying their falcons, a hawk suddenly flew at a majestic eagle, and, in defiance of the eagle's natural advantages, in contempt also of the eagle's traditional royalty, and before the 10 whole assembled field of astonished spectators from Agra and Lahore, killed the eagle on the spot. Amazement seized the sultan at the unequal contest, and burning admiration for its unparalleled result. He commanded that the hawk should be 15 brought before him; he caressed the bird with enthusiasm; and he ordered that, for the commemoration of his matchless courage, a diadem of gold and rubies should be solemnly placed on the hawk's head, but then that, immediately after this solemn 20 coronation, the bird should be led off to execution, as the most valiant indeed of traitors, but not the less a traitor, as having dared to rise rebelliously against his liege lord and anointed sovereign, the eagle. "Now," said I to the Welshman, "to you 25 and me, as men of refined sensibilities, how painful it would have been that this poor Brummagem brute, the 'Tallyho,' in the impossible case of a victory over us, should have been crowned with Birmingham tinsel, with paste diamonds and Roman 30 pearls, and then led off to instant execution."

The Welshman doubted if that could be warranted by law. And, when I hinted at the 6th of Edward Longshanks, chap. 18, for regulating the precedency of coaches, as being probably the statute relied on
5 for the capital punishment of such offenses, he replied dryly that, if the attempt to pass a mail really were treasonable, it was a pity that the "Tallyho" appeared to have so imperfect an acquaintance with law.

10 The modern modes of traveling cannot compare with the old mail-coach system in grandeur and power. They boast of more velocity, — not, however, as a consciousness, but as a fact of our lifeless knowledge, resting upon *alien* evidence: as, for
15 instance, because somebody *says* that we have gone fifty miles in the hour, though we are far from feeling it as a personal experience; or upon the evidence of a result, as that actually we find ourselves in York four hours after leaving London.
20 Apart from such an assertion, or such a result, I myself am little aware of the pace. But, seated on the old mail coach, we needed no evidence out of ourselves to indicate the velocity. On this system the word was not *magna loquimur*, as upon
25 railways, but *vivimus*. Yes, "*magna vivimus*"; we do not make verbal ostentation of our grandeurs, we realize our grandeurs in act, and in the very experience of life. The vital experience of the glad animal sensibilities made doubts impossible
30 on the question of our speed; we heard our speed, we saw it, we felt it as a thrilling; and this speed

was not the product of blind insensate agencies, that had no sympathy to give, but was incarnated in the fiery eyeballs of the noblest amongst brutes, in his dilated nostril, spasmodic muscles, and thunder-beating hoofs. The sensibility of the horse, 5 uttering itself in the maniac light of his eye, might be the last vibration of such a movement; the glory of Salamanca might be the first. But the intervening links that connected them, that spread the earthquake of battle into the eyeballs of the 10 horse, were the heart of man and its electric thrillings — kindling in the rapture of the fiery strife, and then propagating its own tumults by contagious shouts and gestures to the heart of his servant the horse. But now, on the new system of trav- 15 eling, iron tubes and boilers have disconnected man's heart from the ministers of his locomotion. Nile nor Trafalgar has power to raise an extra bubble in a steam kettle. The galvanic cycle is broken up forever; man's imperial nature no longer sends 20 itself forward through the electric sensibility of the horse; the interagencies are gone in the mode of communication between the horse and his master out of which grew so many aspects of sublimity under accidents of mists that hid, or sudden blazes 25 that revealed, of mobs that agitated, or midnight solitudes that awed. Tidings fitted to convulse all nations must henceforwards travel by culinary process; and the trumpet that once announced from afar the laureled mail, heart-shaking when 30 heard screaming on the wind and proclaiming

itself through the darkness to every village or solitary house on its route, has now given way forever to the pot-walloping of the boiler. Thus have perished multiform openings for public expressions of interest, scenical yet natural, in great national tidings, — for revelations of faces and groups that could not offer themselves amongst the fluctuating mobs of a railway station. The gatherings of gazers about a laureled mail had one center, and acknowledged one sole interest. But the crowds attending at a railway station have as little unity as running water, and own as many centers as there are separate carriages in the train.

How else, for example, than as a constant watcher for the dawn, and for the London mail that in summer months entered about daybreak amongst the lawny thickets of Marlborough forest, couldst thou, sweet Fanny of the Bath road, have become the glorified inmate of my dreams? Yet Fanny, as the loveliest young woman for face and person that perhaps in my whole life I have beheld, merited the station which even now, from a distance of forty years, she holds in my dreams; yes, though by links of natural association she brings along with her a troop of dreadful creatures, fabulous and not fabulous, that are more abominable to the heart than Fanny and the dawn are delightful.

Miss Fanny of the Bath road, strictly speaking, lived at a mile's distance from that road, but came so continually to meet the mail that I on my frequent transits rarely missed her, and naturally connected

her image with the great thoroughfare where only I had ever seen her. Why she came so punctually I do not exactly know; but I believe with some burden of commissions, to be executed in Bath, which had gathered to her own residence as a central rendezvous for converging them. The mail coachman who drove the Bath mail and wore the royal livery¹ happened to be Fanny's grandfather. A good man he was, that loved his beautiful granddaughter, and, loving her wisely, was vigilant over her deportment in any case where young Oxford might happen to be concerned. Did my vanity then suggest that I myself, individually, could fall within the line of his terrors? Certainly not, as regarded any physical pretensions that I could plead; for Fanny (as a chance passenger from her own neighborhood once told me) counted in her train a hundred and ninety-nine professed admirers, if not open aspirants to her favor; and probably not one of the whole brigade but excelled myself in personal advantages. Ulysses even, with the unfair advantage of his accursed bow, could hardly have undertaken that amount of suitors. So the

¹ "Wore the royal livery":—The general impression was that the royal livery belonged of right to the mail coachmen as their professional dress. But that was an error. To the guard it *did* belong, I believe, and was obviously essential as an official warrant, and as a means of instant identification for his person, in the discharge of his important public duties. But the coachman, and especially if his place in the series did not connect him immediately with London and the General Post-Office, obtained the scarlet coat only as an honorary distinction after long (or, if not long, trying and special) service.

danger might have seemed slight — only that woman is universally aristocratic; it is amongst her nobilities of heart that she *is* so. Now, the aristocratic distinctions in my favor might easily
5 with Miss Fanny have compensated my physical deficiencies. Did I then make love to Fanny? Why, yes; about as much love as one *could* make whilst the mail was changing horses — a process which, ten years later, did not occupy above eighty
10 seconds; but *then*, — viz., about Waterloo — it occupied five times eighty. Now, four hundred seconds offer a field quite ample enough for whispering into a young woman's ear a great deal of truth, and (by the way of parenthesis) some trifle of false-
15 hood. Grandpapa did right, therefore, to watch me. And yet, as happens too often to the grandpapas of earth in a contest with the admirers of granddaughters, how vainly would he have watched me had I meditated any evil whisper to Fanny!
20 She, it is my belief, would have protected herself against any man's evil suggestions. But he, as the result showed, could not have intercepted the opportunities for such suggestions. Yet, why not? Was he not active? Was he not blooming? Bloom-
25 ing he was as Fanny herself.

“ Say, all our praises why should lords —— ”

Stop, that's not the line.

“ Say, all our roses why should girls engross ? ”

The coachman showed rosy blossoms on his face
30 deeper even than his granddaughter's — *his* being

drawn from the ale cask, Fanny's from the fountains of the dawn. But, in spite of his blooming face, some infirmities he had; and one particularly in which he too much resembled a crocodile. This lay in a monstrous inaptitude for turning round. 5 The crocodile, I presume, owes that inaptitude to the absurd length of his back; but in our grand-papa it arose rather from the absurd *breadth* of his back, combined, possibly, with some growing stiffness in his legs. Now, upon this crocodile infirmity 10 of his I planted a human advantage for tendering my homage to Miss Fanny. In defiance of all his honorable vigilance, no sooner had he presented to us his mighty Jovian back (what a field for displaying to mankind his royal scarlet!), whilst in- 15 specting professionally the buckles, the straps, and the silvery turrets¹ of his harness, than I raised Miss Fanny's hand to my lips, and, by the mixed tenderness and respectfulness of my manner, caused her easily to understand how happy it would make me 20 to rank upon her list as No. 10 or 12: in which case a few casualties amongst her lovers (and, observe, they *hanged* liberally in those days) might have promoted me speedily to the top of the tree; as, on the other hand, with how much loyalty of sub- 25

¹ “*Turrets*: — As one who loves and venerates Chaucer for his unrivaled merits of tenderness, of picturesque characterization, and of narrative skill, I noticed with great pleasure that the word *torrettes* is used by him to designate the little devices through which the reins are made to pass. This same word, in the same exact sense, I heard uniformly used by many scores of illustrious mail coachmen to whose confidential friendship I had the honor of being admitted in my younger days.

mission I acquiesced by anticipation in her award, supposing that she should plant me in the very rearward of her favor, as No. 199 + 1. Most truly I loved this beautiful and ingenuous girl; and, had
5 it not been for the Bath mail, timing all courtships by post-office allowance, heaven only knows what might have come of it. People talk of being over head and ears in love; now, the mail was the cause that I sank only over ears in love, — which, you
10 know, still left a trifle of brain to overlook the whole conduct of the affair.

Ah, reader! when I look back upon those days, it seems to me that all things change — all things perish. “Perish the roses and the palms of kings”:
15 perish even the crowns and trophies of Waterloo: thunder and lightning are not the thunder and lightning which I remember. Roses are degenerating. The Fannies of our island — though this I say with reluctance — are not visibly improving;
20 and the Bath road is notoriously superannuated. Crocodiles, you will say, are stationary. Mr. Waterton tells me that the crocodile does *not* change, — that a cayman, in fact, or an alligator, is just as good for riding upon as he was in the time of the
25 Pharaohs. *That* may be; but the reason is that the crocodile does not live fast — he is a slow coach. I believe it is generally understood among naturalists that the crocodile is a blockhead. It is my own impression that the Pharaohs were also block-
30 heads. Now, as the Pharaohs and the crocodile domineered over Egyptian society, this accounts

for a singular mistake that prevailed through innumerable generations on the Nile. The crocodile made the ridiculous blunder of supposing man to be meant chiefly for his own eating. Man, taking a different view of the subject, naturally met that 5 mistake by another: he viewed the crocodile as a thing sometimes to worship, but always to run away from. And this continued till Mr. Waterton¹ changed the relations between the animals. The mode of escaping from the reptile he showed to be not by 10 running away, but by leaping on its back booted and spurred. The two animals had misunderstood each other. The use of the crocodile has now been cleared up — viz., to be ridden; and the final cause of man is that he may improve the health of the 15 crocodile by riding him a-fox-hunting before breakfast. And it is pretty certain that any crocodile who has been regularly hunted through the season, and is master of the weight he carries, will take a six-barred gate now as well as ever he would have 20 done in the infancy of the pyramids.

If, therefore, the crocodile does *not* change, all things else undeniably *do*: even the shadow of the

¹ "Mr. Waterton": — Had the reader lived through the last generation, he would not need to be told that, some thirty or thirty-five years back, Mr. Waterton, a distinguished country gentleman of ancient family in Northumberland, publicly mounted and rode in top boots a savage old crocodile, that was restive and very impertinent, but all to no purpose. The crocodile jibbed and tried to kick, but vainly. He was no more able to throw the squire than Sinbad was to throw the old scoundrel who used his back without paying for it, until he discovered a mode (slightly immoral, perhaps, though some think not) of murdering the old fraudulent jockey, and so circuitously of unhorsing him.

pyramids grows less. And often the restoration in vision of Fanny and the Bath road makes me too pathetically sensible of that truth. Out of the darkness, if I happen to call back the image of Fanny, 5 uprises suddenly from a gulf of forty years a rose in June; or, if I think for an instant of the rose in June, uprises the heavenly face of Fanny. One after the other, like the antiphonies in the choral service, rise Fanny and the rose in June, then back again the 10 rose in June and Fanny. Then come both together, as in a chorus — roses and Fannies, Fannies and roses, without end, thick as blossoms in paradise. Then comes a venerable crocodile, in a royal livery of scarlet and gold, with sixteen capes; and the 15 crocodile is driving four-in-hand from the box of the Bath mail. And suddenly we upon the mail are pulled up by a mighty dial, sculptured with the hours, that mingle with the heavens and the heavenly host. Then all at once we are arrived at Marlbor- 20 ough forest, amongst the lovely households¹ of the roedeer; the deer and their fawns retire into the dewy thickets; the thickets are rich with roses; once again the roses call up the sweet countenance of Fanny; and she, being the granddaughter of a croco- 25 dile, awakens a dreadful host of semi-legendary

¹ "*Households*": — Roedeer do not congregate in herds like the fallow or the red deer, but by separate families, parents and children; which feature of approximation to the sanctity of human hearths, added to their comparatively miniature and graceful proportions, conciliates to them an interest of peculiar tenderness, supposing even that this beautiful creature is less characteristically impressed with the grandeurs of savage and forest life.

animals — griffins, dragons, basilisks, sphinxes — till at length the whole vision of fighting images crowds into one towering armorial shield, a vast emblazonry of human charities and human loveliness that have perished, but quartered heraldically 5 with unutterable and demoniac natures, whilst over all rises, as a surmounting crest, one fair female hand, with the forefinger pointing, in sweet, sorrowful admonition, upwards to heaven, where is sculptured the eternal writing which proclaims the frailty 10 of earth and her children.

GOING DOWN WITH VICTORY

But the grandest chapter of our experience within the whole mail-coach service was on those occasions when we went down from London with the news of victory. A period of about ten years stretched 15 from Trafalgar to Waterloo; the second and third years of which period (1806 and 1807) were comparatively sterile; but the other nine (from 1805 to 1815 inclusively) furnished a long succession of victories, the least of which, in such a contest of Titans, 20 had an inappreciable value of position: partly for its absolute interference with the plans of our enemy, but still more from its keeping alive through central Europe the sense of a deep-seated vulnerability in France. Even to tease the coasts of our enemy, 25 to mortify them by continual blockades, to insult them by capturing if it were but a baubling schooner under the eyes of their arrogant armies, repeated

from time to time a sullen proclamation of power lodged in one quarter to which the hopes of Christendom turned in secret. How much more loudly must this proclamation have spoken in the audacity¹ of having bearded the *élite* of their troops, and having beaten them in pitched battles! Five years of life it was worth paying down for the privilege of an outside place on a mail coach, when carrying down the first tidings of any such event. And it is to be noted that, from our insular situation, and the multitude of our frigates disposable for the rapid transmission of intelligence, rarely did any unauthorized rumor steal away a prelibation from the first aroma of the regular dispatches. The government news was generally the earliest news.

From eight P.M. to fifteen or twenty minutes later imagine the mails assembled on parade in Lombard Street; where, at that time,² and not in St. Martin's-le-Grand, was seated the General Post-Office. In

¹ "*Audacity*":—Such the French accounted it; and it has struck me that Soult would not have been so popular in London, at the period of her present Majesty's coronation, or in Manchester, on occasion of his visit to that town, if they had been aware of the insolence with which he spoke of us in notes written at intervals from the field of Waterloo. As though it had been mere felony in our army to look a French one in the face, he said in more notes than one, dated from two to four P.M. on the field of Waterloo, "Here are the English—we have them; they are caught *en flagrant delit*." Yet no man should have known us better; no man had drunk deeper from the cup of humiliation than Soult had in 1809, when ejected by us with headlong violence from Oporto, and pursued through a long line of wrecks to the frontier of Spain; and subsequently at Albuera, in the bloodiest of recorded battles, to say nothing of Toulouse, he should have learned our pretensions.

² "*At that time*":—I speak of the era previous to Waterloo.

what exact strength we mustered I do not remember; but, from the length of each separate *attelage*, we filled the street, though a long one, and though we were drawn up in double file. On *any* night the spectacle was beautiful. The absolute perfection 5 of all the appointments about the carriages and the harness, their strength, their brilliant cleanliness, their beautiful simplicity — but, more than all, the royal magnificence of the horses — were what might first have fixed the attention. Every carriage 10 on every morning in the year was taken down to an official inspector for examination: wheels, axles, linchpins, pole, glasses, lamps, were all critically probed and tested. Every part of every carriage had been cleaned, every horse had been groomed, 15 with as much rigor as if they belonged to a private gentleman; and that part of the spectacle offered itself always. But the night before us is a night of victory; and, behold! to the ordinary display what a heart-shaking addition! — horses, men, carriages, 20 all are dressed in laurels and flowers, oak leaves and ribbons. The guards, as being officially his Majesty's servants, and of the coachmen such as are within the privilege of the post-office, wear the royal liveries of course; and, as it is summer (for all the 25 *land* victories were naturally won in summer), they wear, on this fine evening, these liveries exposed to view, without any covering of upper coats. Such a costume, and the elaborate arrangement of the laurels in their hats, dilate their hearts, by giving 30 to them openly a personal connection with the great

news in which already they have the general interest of patriotism. That great national sentiment surmounts and quells all sense of ordinary distinctions. Those passengers who happen to be gentlemen are now hardly to be distinguished as such except by dress; for the usual reserve of their manner in speaking to the attendants has on this night melted away. One heart, one pride, one glory, connects every man by the transcendent bond of his national blood.

10 The spectators, who are numerous beyond precedent, express their sympathy with these fervent feelings by continual hurrahs. Every moment are shouted aloud by the post-office servants, and summoned to draw up, the great ancestral names of cities known

15 to history through a thousand years — Lincoln, Winchester, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Oxford, Bristol, Manchester, York, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Stirling, Aberdeen — expressing the grandeur of the empire by the antiquity of its towns, and the

20 grandeur of the mail establishment by the diffusive radiation of its separate missions. Every moment you hear the thunder of lids locked down upon the mail bags. That sound to each individual mail is the signal for drawing off; which process is the finest

25 part of the entire spectacle. Then come the horses into play. Horses! can these be horses that bound off with the action and gestures of leopards? What stir! — what sea-like ferment! — what a thundering of wheels! — what a trampling of hoofs! — what a

30 sounding of trumpets! — what farewell cheers — what redoubling peals of brotherly congratulation,

connecting the name of the particular mail — “Liverpool forever!” — with the name of the particular victory — “Badajoz forever!” or “Salamanca forever!” The half-slumbering consciousness that all night long, and all the next day — perhaps for even a longer period — many of these mails, like fire racing along a train of gunpowder, will be kindling at every instant new successions of burning joy, has an obscure effect of multiplying the victory itself, by multiplying to the imagination into infinity the stages of its progressive diffusion. A fiery arrow seems to be let loose, which from that moment is destined to travel, without intermission, westwards for three hundred¹ miles — northwards for six hun-

1 “*Three hundred*” :— Of necessity, this scale of measurement, to an American, if he happens to be a thoughtless man, must sound ludicrous. Accordingly, I remember a case in which an American writer indulges himself in the luxury of a little fibbing by ascribing to an Englishman a pompous account of the Thames, constructed entirely upon American ideas of grandeur, and concluding in something like these terms :—“And, sir, arriving at London, this mighty father of rivers attains a breadth of at least two furlongs, having, in its winding course, traversed the astonishing distance of one hundred and seventy miles.” And this the candid American thinks it fair to contrast with the scale of the Mississippi. Now, it is hardly worth while to answer a pure fiction gravely ; else one might say that no Englishman out of Bedlam ever thought of looking in an island for the rivers of a continent, nor, consequently, could have thought of looking for the peculiar grandeur of the Thames in the length of its course, or in the extent of soil which it drains. Yet, if he *had* been so absurd, the American might have recollected that a river, not to be compared with the Thames even as to volume of water — viz., the Tiber — has contrived to make itself heard of in this world for twenty-five centuries to an extent not reached as yet by any river, however corpulent, of his own land. The glory of the Thames is measured by the destiny of the population to which it ministers, by the commerce

dred ; and the sympathy of our Lombard Street friends at parting is exalted a hundredfold by a sort of visionary sympathy with the yet slumbering sympathies which in so vast a succession we are going to
5 awake.

Liberated from the embarrassments of the city, and issuing into the broad uncrowded avenues of the northern suburbs, we soon begin to enter upon our natural pace of ten miles an hour. In the broad
10 light of the summer evening, the sun, perhaps, only just at the point of setting, we are seen from every story of every house. Heads of every age crowd to the windows ; young and old understand the language of our victorious symbols ; and rolling volleys
15 of sympathizing cheers run along us, behind us, and before us. The beggar, rearing himself against the wall, forgets his lameness — real or assumed — thinks not of his whining trade, but stands erect, with bold exulting smiles, as we pass him. The vic-
20 tory has healed him, and says, Be thou whole ! Women and children, from garrets alike and cellars, through infinite London, look down or look up with

which it supports, by the grandeur of the empire in which, though far from the largest, it is the most influential stream. Upon some such scale, and not by a transfer of Columbian standards, is the course of our English mails to be valued. The American may fancy the effect of his own valuations to our English ears by supposing the case of a Siberian glorifying his country in these terms : — “ These wretches, sir, in France and England, cannot march half a mile in any direction without finding a house where food can be had and lodging ; whereas such is the noble desolation of our magnificent country that in many a direction for a thousand miles I will engage that a dog shall not find shelter from a snowstorm, nor a wren find an apology for breakfast.”

loving eyes upon our gay ribbons and our martial laurels; sometimes kiss their hands; sometimes hang out, as signals of affection, pocket handkerchiefs, aprons, dusters, anything that, by catching the summer breezes, will express an aerial jubilation. On 5 the London side of Barnet, to which we draw near within a few minutes after nine, observe that private carriage which is approaching us. The weather being so warm, the glasses are all down; and one may read, as on the stage of a theater, everything that 10 goes on within. It contains three ladies — one likely to be “mamma,” and two of seventeen or eighteen, who are probably her daughters. What lovely animation, what beautiful unpremeditated pantomime, explaining to us every syllable that 15 passes, in these ingenuous girls! By the sudden start and raising of the hands on first discovering our laureled equipage, by the sudden movement and appeal to the elder lady from both of them, and by the heightened color on their animated coun-20 tenances, we can almost hear them saying, “See, see! Look at their laurels! Oh, mamma! there has been a great battle in Spain; and it has been a great victory.” In a moment we are on the point of passing them. We passengers — I on the box, and the two 25 on the roof behind me — raise our hats to the ladies; the coachman makes his professional salute with the whip; the guard even, though punctilious on the matter of his dignity as an officer under the crown, touches his hat. The ladies move to us, in 30 return, with a winning graciousness of gesture; all

smile on each side in a way that nobody could misunderstand, and that nothing short of a grand national sympathy could so instantaneously prompt. Will these ladies say that we are nothing to *them*?
5 Oh, no; they will not say *that*. They cannot deny — they do not deny — that for this night they are our sisters; gentle or simple, scholar or illiterate servant, for twelve hours to come, we on the outside have the honor to be their brothers. Those poor
10 women, again, who stop to gaze upon us with delight at the entrance of Barnet, and seem, by their air of weariness, to be returning from labor — do you mean to say that they are washerwomen and charwomen? Oh, my poor friend, you are quite mis-
15 taken. I assure you they stand in a far higher rank; for this one night they feel themselves by birthright to be daughters of England, and answer to no humbler title.

Every joy, however, even rapturous joy — such
20 is the sad law of earth — may carry with it grief, or fear of grief, to some. Three miles beyond Barnet, we see approaching us another private carriage, nearly repeating the circumstances of the former case. Here, also, the glasses are all down; here,
25 also, is an elderly lady seated; but the two daughters are missing; for the single young person sitting by the lady's side seems to be an attendant — so I judge from her dress, and her air of respectful reserve. The lady is in mourning; and her counte-
30 nance expresses sorrow. At first she does not look up; so that I believe she is not aware of our ap-

proach, until she hears the measured beating of our horses' hoofs. Then she raises her eyes to settle them painfully on our triumphal equipage. Our decorations explain the case to her at once; but she beholds them with apparent anxiety, or even with 5 terror. Some time before this, I, finding it difficult to hit a flying mark when embarrassed by the coachman's person and reins intervening, had given to the guard a "Courier" evening paper, containing the gazette, for the next carriage that might pass. Accordingly he tossed it in, so folded that the huge capitals expressing some such legend as GLORIOUS VICTORY might catch the eye at once. To see the paper, however, at all, interpreted as it was by our ensigns of triumph, explained everything; and, if 15 the guard were right in thinking the lady to have received it with a gesture of horror, it could not be doubtful that she had suffered some deep personal affliction in connection with this Spanish war.

Here, now, was the case of one who, having formerly suffered, might, erroneously perhaps, be distressing herself with anticipations of another similar suffering. That same night, and hardly three hours later, occurred the reverse case. A poor woman, who too probably would find herself, in a day or two, 25 to have suffered the heaviest of afflictions by the battle, blindly allowed herself to express an exultation so unmeasured in the news and its details as gave to her the appearance which amongst Celtic Highlanders is called *fey*. This was at some little 30 town where we changed horses an hour or two after

midnight. Some fair or wake had kept the people up out of their beds, and had occasioned a partial illumination of the stalls and booths, presenting an unusual but very impressive effect. We saw many
5 lights moving about as we drew near; and perhaps the most striking scene on the whole route was our reception at this place. The flashing of torches and the beautiful radiance of blue lights (technically, Bengal lights) upon the heads of our horses; the
10 fine effect of such a showery and ghostly illumination falling upon our flowers and glittering laurels¹; whilst all around ourselves, that formed a center of light, the darkness gathered on the rear and flanks in massy blackness: these optical splendors, to-
15 gether with the prodigious enthusiasm of the people, composed a picture at once scenical and affecting, theatrical and holy. As we stayed for three or four minutes, I alighted; and immediately from a dismantled stall in the street, where no doubt she had
20 been presiding through the earlier part of the night, advanced eagerly a middle-aged woman. The sight of my newspaper it was that had drawn her attention upon myself. The victory which we were carrying down to the provinces on *this* occasion was
25 the imperfect one of Talavera — imperfect for its results, such was the virtual treachery of the Spanish general, Cuesta, but not imperfect in its ever memorable heroism. I told her the main outline

¹ “*Glittering laurels*”:—I must observe that the color of green suffers almost a spiritual change and exaltation under the effect of Bengal lights.

of the battle. The agitation of her enthusiasm had been so conspicuous when listening, and when first applying for information, that I could not but ask her if she had not some relative in the Peninsular army. Oh yes; her only son was there. In what 5 regiment? He was a trooper in the 23d Dragoons. My heart sank within me as she made that answer. This sublime regiment, which an Englishman should never mention without raising his hat to their memory, had made the most memorable and effective 10 charge recorded in military annals. They leaped their horses — *over* a trench where they could; *into* it, and with the result of death or mutilation, when they could *not*. What proportion cleared the trench is nowhere stated. Those who *did* closed up and 15 went down upon the enemy with such divinity of fervor (I use the word *divinity* by design: the inspiration of God must have prompted this movement for those whom even then He was calling to His presence) that two results followed. As re-20 garded the enemy, this 23d Dragoons, not, I believe, originally three hundred and fifty strong, paralyzed a French column six thousand strong, then ascended the hill, and fixed the gaze of the whole French army. As regarded themselves, the 23d were sup-25 posed at first to have been barely not annihilated; but eventually, I believe, about one in four survived. And this, then, was the regiment — a regiment already for some hours glorified and hallowed to the ear of all London, as lying stretched, by a large 30 majority, upon one bloody aceldama — in which

the young trooper served whose mother was now talking in a spirit of such joyous enthusiasm. Did I tell her the truth? Had I the heart to break up her dreams? No. To-morrow, said I to myself—
5 to-morrow or the next day, will publish the worst. For one night more wherefore should she not sleep in peace? After to-morrow the chances are too many that peace will forsake her pillow. This brief respite, then, let her owe to *my* gift and *my* forbearance.
10 But, if I told her not of the bloody price that had been paid, not therefore was I silent on the contributions from her son's regiment to that day's service and glory. I showed her not the funeral banners under which the noble regiment was sleeping. I
15 lifted not the overshadowing laurels from the bloody trench in which horse and rider lay mangled together. But I told her how these dear children of England, officers and privates, had leaped their horses over all obstacles as gayly as hunters to the morning's chase.
20 I told her how they rode their horses into the midst of death, — saying to myself, but not saying to *her*, “and laid down their young lives for thee, O mother England! as willingly — poured out their noble blood as cheerfully — as ever, after a long day's
25 sport, when infants, they had rested their weary heads upon their mother's knees, or had sunk to sleep in her arms.” Strange it is, yet true, that she seemed to have no fears for her son's safety, even after this knowledge that the 23d Dragoons had been
30 memorably engaged; but so much was she enraptured by the knowledge that *his* regiment, and there-

fore that *he*, had rendered conspicuous service in the dreadful conflict — a service which had actually made them, within the last twelve hours, the foremost topic of conversation in London — so absolutely was fear swallowed up in joy — that, in the 5 mere simplicity of her fervent nature, the poor woman threw her arms round my neck, as she thought of her son, and gave to *me* the kiss which secretly was meant for *him*.

SECTION II — THE VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH

What is to be taken as the predominant opinion 10 of man, reflective and philosophic, upon SUDDEN DEATH? It is remarkable that, in different conditions of society, sudden death has been variously regarded as the consummation of an earthly career most fervently to be desired, or, again, as that con- 15 summation which is with most horror to be deprecated. Cæsar the Dictator, at his last dinner party (*cæna*), on the very evening before his assassination, when the minutes of his earthly career were numbered, being asked what death, in *his* judgment, 20 might be pronounced the most eligible, replied "That which should be most sudden." On the other hand, the divine Litany of our English Church, when breathing forth supplications, as if in some representative character, for the whole human race prostrate 25 before God, places such a death in the very van of horrors: "From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder,

and from SUDDEN DEATH — *Good Lord, deliver us.*” Sudden death is here made to crown the climax in a grand ascent of calamities; it is ranked among the last of curses; and yet by the noblest of Romans 5 it was ranked as the first of blessings. In that difference most readers will see little more than the essential difference between Christianity and Paganism. But this, on consideration, I doubt. The Christian Church may be right in its estimate of sudden death; 10 and it is a natural feeling, though after all it may also be an infirm one, to wish for a quiet dismissal from life, as that which *seems* most reconcilable with meditation, with penitential retrospects, and with the humilities of farewell prayer. There does not, 15 however, occur to me any direct scriptural warrant for this earnest petition of the English Litany, unless under a special construction of the word “sudden.” It seems a petition indulged rather and conceded to human infirmity than exacted from human piety. 20 It is not so much a doctrine built upon the eternities of the Christian system as a plausible opinion built upon special varieties of physical temperament. Let, that, however, be as it may, two remarks suggest themselves as prudent restraints upon a doc- 25 trine which else *may* wander, and *has* wandered, into an uncharitable superstition. The first is this: that many people are likely to exaggerate the horror of a sudden death from the disposition to lay a false stress upon words or acts simply because by an acci- 30 dent they have become *final* words or acts. If a man dies, for instance, by some sudden death when

he happens to be intoxicated, such a death is falsely regarded with peculiar horror; as though the intoxication were suddenly exalted into a blasphemy. But *that* is unphilosophic. The man was, or he was not, *habitually* a drunkard. If not, if his intoxication were a solitary accident, there can be no reason for allowing special emphasis to this act simply because through misfortune it became his final act. Nor, on the other hand, if it were no accident, but one of his *habitual* transgressions, will it be the more habitual or the more a transgression because some sudden calamity, surprising him, has caused this habitual transgression to be also a final one. Could the man have had any reason even dimly to foresee his own sudden death, there would have been a new feature in his act of intemperance — a feature of presumption and irreverence, as in one that, having known himself drawing near to the presence of God, should have suited his demeanor to an expectation so awful. But this is no part of the case supposed. And the only new element in the man's act is not any element of special immorality, but simply of special misfortune.

The other remark has reference to the meaning of the word *sudden*. Very possibly Cæsar and the Christian Church do not differ in the way supposed, — that is, do not differ by any difference of doctrine as between Pagan and Christian views of the moral temper appropriate to death; but perhaps they are contemplating different cases. Both contemplate a violent death, a *Biaθavatos* — death that is *βιαίος*,

or, in other words, death that is brought about, not by internal and spontaneous change, but by active force having its origin from without. In this meaning the two authorities agree. Thus far they are in
5 harmony. But the difference is that the Roman by the word "sudden" means *unlingering*, whereas the Christian Litany by "sudden death" means a death *without warning*, consequently without any available summons to religious preparation. The
10 poor mutineer who kneels down to gather into his heart the bullets from twelve firelocks of his pitying comrades dies by a most sudden death in Cæsar's sense; one shock, one mighty spasm, one (possibly *not* one) groan, and all is over. But, in the sense of
15 the Litany, the mutineer's death is far from sudden: his offense originally, his imprisonment, his trial, the interval between his sentence and its execution, having all furnished him with separate warnings of his fate — having all summoned him to meet it
20 with solemn preparation.

Here at once, in this sharp verbal distinction, we comprehend the faithful earnestness with which a holy Christian Church pleads on behalf of her poor departing children that God would vouchsafe to
25 them the last great privilege and distinction possible on a deathbed, viz., the opportunity of untroubled preparation for facing this mighty trial. Sudden death, as a mere variety in the modes of dying where death in some shape is inevitable, pro-
30 poses a question of choice which, equally in the Roman and the Christian sense, will be variously

answered according to each man's variety of temperament. Meantime, one aspect of sudden death there is, one modification, upon which no doubt can arise, that of all martyrdoms it is the most agitating — viz., where it surprises a man under circumstances 5 which offer (or which seem to offer) some hurrying, flying, inappreciably minute chance of evading it. Sudden as the danger which it affronts must be any effort by which such an evasion can be accomplished. Even *that*, even the sickening necessity for hurrying 10 in extremity where all hurry seems destined to be vain, — even that anguish is liable to a hideous exasperation in one particular case: viz., where the appeal is made not exclusively to the instinct of self-preservation, but to the conscience, on behalf of 15 some other life besides your own, accidentally thrown upon *your* protection. To fail, to collapse in a service merely your own, might seem comparatively venial; though, in fact, it is far from venial. But to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly 20 thrown into your hands the final interests of another, — a fellow-creature shuddering between the gates of life and death: this, to a man of apprehensive conscience, would mingle the misery of an atrocious criminality with the misery of a bloody calam- 25 ity. You are called upon, by the case supposed, possibly to die, but to die at the very moment when, by any even partial failure or effeminate collapse of your energies, you will be self-denounced as a murderer. You had but the twinkling of an eye for 30 your effort, and that effort might have been unavail-

ing; but to have risen to the level of such an effort would have rescued you, though not from dying, yet from dying as a traitor to your final and farewell duty.

5 The situation here contemplated exposes a dreadful ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature. It is not that men generally are summoned to face such awful trials. But potentially, and in shadowy outline, such a trial is moving subterrane-
10 ously in perhaps all men's natures. Upon the secret mirror of our dreams such a trial is darkly projected, perhaps, to every one of us. That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, through languishing prostration in hope and the energies of
15 hope, that constant sequel of lying down before the lion publishes the secret frailty of human nature — reveals its deep-seated falsehood to itself — records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream; perhaps, as by some sorrowful
20 doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation in Eden. Every one of us, in this dream, has a bait offered to the infirm places of his own individual will; once again a snare is presented for tempting him
25 into captivity to a luxury of ruin; once again, as in aboriginal Paradise, the man falls by his own choice; again, by infinite iteration, the ancient earth groans to Heaven, through her secret caves, over the weakness of her child. "Nature, from her seat, sighing
30 through all her works," again "gives signs of woe that all is lost"; and again the counter sigh is re-

peated to the sorrowing heavens for the endless rebellion against God. It is not without probability that in the world of dreams every one of us ratifies for himself the original transgression. In dreams, perhaps under some secret conflict of the midnight 5 sleeper, lighted up to the consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several child of our mysterious race completes for himself the treason of the aboriginal fall.

The incident, so memorable in itself by its features 10 of horror, and so scenical by its grouping for the eye, which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death* occurred to myself in the dead of night, as a solitary spectator, when seated on the box of the Manchester and Glasgow mail, in the second or third 15 summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances, because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post-offices 20 were so arranged, either through necessity or through defect of system, as to make it requisite for the main northwestern mail (*i.e.*, the *down* mail) on reaching Manchester to halt for a number of hours; how many, I do not remember; six or seven, I 25 think; but the result was that, in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northwards about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air; 30 meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat

at the post-office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen, and the streets being at that hour empty, so as to offer no opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way, and did not
5 reach the post-office until it was considerably past midnight; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning), I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail, blazing through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was
10 not yet lost. Past the time it was; but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to start. I ascended to my seat on the box, where my cloak was still lying as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a
15 nautical discoverer, who leaves a bit of bunting on the shore of his discovery, by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds, with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket handker-
20 chief once and forever upon that virgin soil: thenceforward claiming the *jus domini* to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the center of the earth below it; so that all people found after this warning either aloft in upper
25 chambers of the atmosphere, or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers — kicked, that is to say, or decapitated, as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant,
30 the owner of the said pocket handkerchief. In the present case, it is probable that my cloak might not

have been respected, and the *jus gentium* might have been cruelly violated in my person — for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality; but it so happened that on this night there was no other outside passenger; and thus the crime, which else was but too probable, missed fire for want of a criminal. 5

Having mounted the box, I took a small quantity of laudanum, having already traveled two hundred and fifty miles — viz., from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the box, the coachman. And in *that* also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Virgil as 15

“Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.” 20

He answered to the conditions in every one of the items: — 1, a monster he was; 2, dreadful; 3, shapeless; 4, huge; 5, who had lost an eye. But why should *that* delight me? Had he been one of the Calendars in the “Arabian Nights,” and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity, what right had *I* to exult in his misfortune? I did *not* exult; I delighted in no man’s punishment, though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) identified in an instant 25 30

an old friend of mine whom I had known in the south for some years as the most masterly of mail coachmen. He was the man in all Europe that could (if any could) have driven six-in-hand full gallop over
5 *Al Sirat* — that dreadful bridge of Mahomet, with no side battlements, and of *extra* room not enough for a razor's edge — leading right across the bottomless gulf. Under this eminent man, whom in Greek I cognominated Cyclops *Diphrelates* (Cyclops the
10 Charioteer), I, and others known to me, studied the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic. As a pupil, though I paid extra fees, it is to be lamented that I did not stand high in his esteem. It showed his dogged honesty
15 (though, observe, not his discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation, however, he admitted
20 that I had the whip hand of him. On the present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected, from such explanations as he volunteered, that he
25 had an interest at stake in some suit-at-law now pending at Lancaster; so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his lawsuit.

30 Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrast-

tinating mail, and this procrastinating post-office! Can't they take a lesson upon that subject from *me*? Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the post-office. Will the post-office lay its 5 hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for me? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war, by wind, by 10 weather, in the packet service, which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour, it seems, the post-office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheaten correspondence of Glasgow, and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser intermediate 15 towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard! Manchester, good-by! we've lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post-office: which, however, though I do not mean to part with a serviceable ground of complaint, and one which 20 really *is* such for the horses, to me secretly is an advantage, since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour amongst the next eight or nine, and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile extra per hour. Off we are at last, and at eleven miles an 25 hour; and for the moment I detect no changes in the energy or in the skill of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal, which virtually (though not in law) is the capital of Westmoreland, there were at this time seven stages of eleven miles 30 each. The first five of these, counting from Man-

chester, terminate in Lancaster; which is therefore fifty-five miles north of Manchester, and the same distance exactly from Liverpool. The first three stages terminate in Preston (called, by way of distinction from other towns of that name, *Proud Preston*); at which place it is that the separate roads from Liverpool and from Manchester to the north became confluent.¹ Within these first three stages lay the foundation, the progress, and termination of our night's adventure. During the first stage, I found out that Cyclops was mortal; he was liable to the shocking affection of sleep — a thing which previously I had never suspected. If a man indulges in the vicious habit of sleeping, all the skill in aurigation of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions, avails him nothing. "Oh, Cyclops!" I exclaimed, "thou art mortal. My friend, thou snoorest." Through the first eleven miles, however, this infirmity — which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon — betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself which, instead of mending matters, laid open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster: in

¹ "*Confluent*": — Suppose a capital Y (the Pythagorean letter): Lancaster is at the foot of this letter; Liverpool at the top of the *right* branch; Manchester at the top of the *left*: Proud Preston at the center, where the two branches unite. It is thirty-three miles along either of the two branches; it is twenty-two miles along the stem, — viz., from Preston in the middle to Lancaster at the root. There's a lesson in geography for the reader!

consequence of which for three nights and three days he had not lain down on a bed. During the day he was waiting for his own summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested, or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment, was 5 drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night, or that part of it which at sea would form the middle watch, he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness, but in a way which 10 made it much more alarming; since now, after several days' resistance to this infirmity, at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout the second stage he grew more and more drowsy. In the second mile of the third stage he surrendered himself 15 finally and without a struggle to his perilous temptation. All his past resistance had but deepened the weight of this final oppression. Seven atmospheres of sleep rested upon him; and, to consummate the case, our worthy guard, after singing "Love 20 amongst the Roses" for perhaps thirty times, without invitation and without applause, had in revenge moodily resigned himself to slumber — not so deep, doubtless, as the coachman's, but deep enough for mischief. And thus at last, about ten 25 miles from Preston, it came about that I found myself left in charge of his Majesty's London and Glasgow mail, then running at the least twelve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal than else 30 it must have been thought was the condition of the

roads at night during the assizes. At that time, all the law business of populous Liverpool, and also of populous Manchester, with its vast cincture of populous rural districts, was called up by ancient
5 usage to the tribunal of Lilliputian Lancaster. To break up this old traditional usage required, 1, a conflict with powerful established interests, 2, a large system of new arrangements, and 3, a new parliamentary statute. But as yet this change was
10 merely in contemplation. As things were at present, twice in the year¹ so vast a body of business rolled northwards from the southern quarter of the county that for a fortnight at least it occupied the severe exertions of two judges in its dispatch. The conse-
15 quence of this was that every horse available for such a service, along the whole line of road, was exhausted in carrying down the multitudes of people who were parties to the different suits. By sunset, therefore, it usually happened that, through utter
20 exhaustion amongst men and horses, the road sank into profound silence. Except the exhaustion in the vast adjacent county of York from a contested election, no such silence succeeding to no such fiery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

25 On this occasion the usual silence and solitude prevailed along the road. Not a hoof nor a wheel was to be heard. And, to strengthen this false luxurious confidence in the noiseless roads, it happened also

¹ “*Twice in the year*”:—There were at that time only two assizes even in the most populous counties—viz., the Lent Assizes and the Summer Assizes.

that the night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part, though slightly alive to the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August; in the 5 middle of which lay my own birthday — a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often sigh-born¹ thoughts. The county was my own native county — upon which, in its southern section, more than upon any equal area known to man past or 10 present, had descended the original curse of labor in its heaviest form, not mastering the bodies only of men, as of slaves, or criminals in mines, but working through the fiery will. Upon no equal space of earth was, or ever had been, the same energy of 15 human power put forth daily. At this particular season also of the assizes, that dreadful hurricane of flight and pursuit, as it might have seemed to a stranger, which swept to and from Lancaster all day long, hunting the county up and down, and regu- 20 larly subsiding back into silence about sunset, could not fail (when united with this permanent distinction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labor) to point the thoughts pathetically upon that counter vision of rest, of saintly re- 25 pose from strife and sorrow, towards which, as to their secret haven, the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in solitude continually traveling.

¹ "Sigh-born":—I owe the suggestion of this word to an obscure remembrance of a beautiful phrase in "Giraldus Cambrensis"—viz., *suspiriosæ cogitationes*.

Obliquely, upon our left we were nearing the sea; which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of halcyon repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn were by this time blending; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless and dreamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses, — which, running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance, — there was no sound abroad. In the clouds and on the earth prevailed the same majestic peace; and, in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the ruin of our sublimer thoughts, which are the thoughts of our infancy, we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmosphere. Whatever we may swear with our false feigning lips, in our faithful hearts we still believe, and must forever believe, in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still, in the confidence of children that tread without fear *every* chamber in their father's house, and to whom no door is closed, we, in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like this, ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upwards to the sandals of God.

Suddenly, from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the

distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment; I listened in awe; but then it died away. Once roused, however, I could not but observe with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing 5 of motion; and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction 10 hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have, as regards *thought*, that in the first step towards the possibility of a misfortune I 15 see its total evolution; in the radix of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion; in the first syllable of the dreadful sentence I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves. *Us* our bulk and impetus charmed against 20 peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that were matter of laughter to look back upon, the first face of which was horror, the parting face a jest — for any anxiety to rest upon *our* inter- 25 ests. The mail was not built, I felt assured, nor bespoke, that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But any carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this ominous accident of our situa- 30 tion, — we were on the wrong side of the road. But

then, it may be said, the other party, if other there was, might also be on the wrong side; and two wrongs might make a right. *That* was not likely. The same motive which had drawn *us* to the right-hand side of the road — viz., the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved center — would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would therefore, to a certainty, be traveling on the same side; and from this side, as not being ours in law, the crossing over to the other would, of course, be looked for from *us*.¹ Our lamps, still lighted, would give the impression of vigilance on our part. And every creature that met us would rely upon *us* for quartering.² All this, and if the separate links of the anticipation had been a thousand times more, I saw, not discursively, or by effort, or by succession, but by one flash of horrid simultaneous intuition.

Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead, ah! what a sullen mystery of fear, what a sigh of woe, was that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard! A whisper it was — a whisper from, perhaps, four miles off — secretly announcing a ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevi-

¹ It is true that, according to the law of the case as established by legal precedents, all carriages were required to give way before royal equipages, and therefore before the mail as one of them. But this only increased the danger, as being a regulation very imperfectly made known, very unequally enforced, and therefore often embarrassing the movements on both sides.

² “*Quartering*”: — This is the technical word, and, I presume, derived from the French *cartayer*, to evade a rut or any obstacle.

table; that, being known, was not therefore healed. What could be done — who was it that could do it — to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering coachman? You, reader, think that it 5 would have been in *your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible. Easy was it? See, then, that bronze 10 equestrian statue. The cruel rider has kept the bit in his horse's mouth for two centuries. Unbridle him for a minute, if you please, and wash his mouth with water. Easy was it? Unhorse me, then, that imperial rider; knock me those marble feet 15 from those marble stirrups of Charlemagne.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be? Was it industry in a taxed cart? Was it youthful gayety in a gig? Was it sorrow that 20 loitered, or joy that raced? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion. Whoever were the travelers, something must be done to warn them. Upon the other party rests the active respon- 25 sibility, but upon *us* — and, woe is me! that *us* was reduced to my frail opium-shattered self — rests the responsibility of warning. Yet, how should this be accomplished? Might I not sound the guard's horn? Already, on the first thought, I was making 30 my way over the roof to the guard's seat. But this,

from the accident which I have mentioned, of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof, was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside traveling.

5 And, fortunately, before I had lost much time in the attempt, our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that final stage where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished.
10 The court was sitting; the case was heard; the judge had finished; and only the verdict was yet in arrear.

Before us lay an avenue straight as an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length; and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either
15 side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light; but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic
20 aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! what are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady — though really I see nobody, at an hour and
25 on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you — is it therefore requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour; and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending
30 down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, there is but a minute and a

half. Oh, heavens! what is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting, what help can I offer? Strange it is, and to a mere auditor of the tale might seem laughable, that I should need a suggestion from the "Iliad" to prompt the sole resource that remained. 5 Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus, aided by Pallas? No: but then I needed not the shout that should alarm all Asia militant; such a shout would suffice as 10 might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one gig horse. I shouted — and the young man heard me not. A second time I shouted — and now he heard me, for now he raised his head.

15

Here, then, all had been done that, by me, *could* be done; more on *my* part was not possible. Mine had been the first step; the second was for the young man; the third was for God. If, said I, this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young 20 girl at his side — or, loving her not, if he feels the obligation, pressing upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his protection — he will at least make some effort to save her. If *that* fails, he will not perish 25 the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it; and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in vain to save. But, if he makes no effort, — shrinking without a struggle 30 from his duty, — he himself will not the less certainly

perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less: and why not? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in the world? No; *let* him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted
5 upon him; and, in that case, all our grief will be reserved for the fate of the helpless girl who now, upon the least shadow of failure in *him*, must by the fiercest of translations — must without time for a prayer — must within seventy seconds — stand
10 before the judgment seat of God.

But craven he was not: sudden had been the call upon him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended, the ruin that was coming down: already its gloomy shadow
15 darkened above him; and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah! what a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a day: ah! what a sublime thing does courage seem when some fearful
20 summons on the great deeps of life carries a man, as if running before a hurricane, up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which lie two courses, and a voice says to him audibly, “One way lies hope; take the other, and mourn forever!” How grand
25 a triumph if, even then, amidst the raving of all around him, and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation — is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek his counsel from *Him*!

30 For seven seconds, it might be, of his seventy, the stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us,

as if to search and value every element in the conflict between him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably, like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more, perhaps, he sat with eyes upraised, like one that prayed in sorrow, 5 under some extremity of doubt, for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose; stood upright; and, by a powerful strain upon the reins, raising his horse's fore feet from the ground, he slewed him round on the pivot of his 10 hind legs, so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved; except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done, nothing was done; for the 15 little carriage still occupied the very center of our path, though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late: fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted; and one almighty bound may avail to clear the ground. Hurry, then, hurry! 20 for the flying moments — *they* hurry. Oh, hurry, hurry, my brave young man! for the cruel hoofs of our horses — *they* also hurry! Fast are the flying moments, faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for *him*, if human energy can suffice; faith- 25 ful was he that drove to his terrific duty; faithful was the horse to *his* command. One blow, one impulse given with voice and hand, by the stranger, one rush from the horse, one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence, landed the docile creature's 30 fore feet upon the crown or arching center of the road.

The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow: *that* was evident even to my own agitated sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety if upon the wreck
5 that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage — was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin? What power could answer the question? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, which of these had speed enough
10 to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly.
15 His back was now turned to us; not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril; but, by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed that all was finished as regarded any efforts of *his*. Already in resignation he
20 had rested from his struggle; and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, “Father, which art in heaven, do Thou finish above what I on earth have attempted.” Faster than ever mill race we ran past them in our inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurri-
25 canes that must have sounded in their young cars at the moment of our transit! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke aloud. Either with the swingle-bar, or with the haunch of our near leader, we had struck the off wheel of the little gig;
30 which stood rather obliquely, and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near

wheel. The blow, from the fury of our passage, resounded terrifically. I rose in horror, to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down, and looked back upon the scene; which in a moment told its own 5 tale, and wrote all its records on my heart forever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore feet upon the paved crest of the central road. 10 He of the whole party might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little cany carriage — partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it — as if it sym- 15 pathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not look round; for he 20 knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady —

But the lady —— ! Oh, heavens ! will that spec- 25 tacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing ? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case ; 30 suffer me to recall before your mind the circum-

stances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night — from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight — from the manly
5 tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love — suddenly as from the woods and fields — suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation — suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of
10 cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered; the strife was finished; the vision was closed. In the twinkling of
15 an eye, our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams forever.

SECTION III — DREAM-FUGUE:

FOUNDED ON THE PRECEDING THEME OF SUDDEN
DEATH

“ Whence the sound
Of instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of harp and organ ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen ; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high, 5
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.”

Par. Lost, Bk. XI.

Tumultuosissimamente

Passion of sudden death ! that once in youth I read
and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs¹ !
— rapture of panic taking the shape (which amongst
tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting 10
her sepulchral bonds — of woman’s Ionic form bond-
ing forward from the ruins of her grave with arching
foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands
— waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the
trumpet’s call to rise from dust forever ! Ah, 15
vision too fearful of shuddering humanity on the
brink of almighty abysses ! — vision that didst start
back, that didst reel away, like a shriveling scroll
from before the wrath of fire racing on the wings of
the wind ! Epilepsy so brief of horror, wherefore 20
is it that thou canst not die ? Passing so suddenly

¹ “ *Averted signs* ” : — I read the course and changes of the lady’s agony in the succession of her involuntary gestures ; but it must be remembered that I read all this from the rear, never once catching the lady’s full face, and even her profile imperfectly.

into darkness, wherefore is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams? Fragment of music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more, what aileth thee, 5 that thy deep rolling chords come up at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and after forty years have lost no element of horror?

I

Lo, it is summer — almighty summer ! The everlasting gates of life and summer are thrown open 10 wide; and on the ocean, tranquil and verdant as a savannah, the unknown lady from the dreadful vision and I myself are floating — she upon a fairy pinnacle, and I upon an English three-decker. Both of us are wooing gales of festal happiness 15 within the domain of our common country, within that ancient watery park, within the pathless chase of ocean, where England takes her pleasure as a huntress through winter and summer, from the rising to the setting sun. Ah, what a wilderness of 20 floral beauty was hidden, or was suddenly revealed, upon the tropic islands through which the pinnacle moved ! And upon her deck what a bevy of human flowers: young women how lovely, young men how noble, that were dancing together, and slowly drifting 25 towards *us* amidst music and incense, amidst blossoms from forests and gorgeous corymbi from vintages, amidst natural caroling, and the echoes of sweet girlish laughter. Slowly the pinnacle nears

us, gayly she hails us, and silently she disappears beneath the shadow of our mighty bows. But then, as at some signal from heaven, the music, and the carols, and the sweet echoing of girlish laughter — all are hushed. What evil has smitten the pinnacle, 5 meeting or overtaking her? Did ruin to our friends couch within our own dreadful shadow? Was our shadow the shadow of death? I looked over the bow for an answer, and, behold! the pinnacle was dismantled; the revel and the revellers were found 10 no more; the glory of the vintage was dust; and the forests with their beauty were left without a witness upon the seas. “But where,” and I turned to our crew — “where are the lovely women that danced beneath the awning of flowers and clustering 15 corymbi? Whither have fled the noble young men that danced with *them*?” Answer there was none. But suddenly the man at the mast-head, whose countenance darkened with alarm, cried out, “Sail on the weather beam! Down she comes upon us: in 20 seventy seconds she also will founder.”

II

I looked to the weather side, and the summer had departed. The sea was rocking, and shaken with gathering wrath. Upon its surface sat mighty mists, which grouped themselves into arches and long 25 cathedral aisles. Down one of these, with the fiery pace of a quarrel from a cross bow, ran a frigate right athwart our course. “Are they mad?” some voice

exclaimed from our deck. "Do they woo their ruin?" But in a moment, as she was close upon us, some impulse of a heady current or local vortex gave a wheeling bias to her course, and off she forged
5 without a shock. As she ran past us, high aloft amongst the shrouds stood the lady of the pinnace. The deeps opened ahead in malice to receive her, towering surges of foam ran after her, the billows were fierce to catch her. But far away she was
10 borne into desert spaces of the sea; whilst still by sight I followed her, as she ran before the howling gale, chased by angry sea birds and by maddening billows; still I saw her, as at the moment when she ran past us, standing amongst the shrouds, with her
15 white draperies streaming before the wind. There she stood, with hair disheveled, one hand clutched amongst the tackling — rising, sinking, fluttering, trembling, praying; there for leagues I saw her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to heaven,
20 amidst the fiery crests of the pursuing waves and the raving of the storm; until at last, upon a sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery, all was hidden forever in driving showers; and afterwards, but when I knew not, nor how,

III

25 Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance, wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awakened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar shore. The morning twilight even then was

breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often 5 she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But, when I leaped ashore and followed on her steps to warn her of a peril in front, alas! from me she fled as from another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster 10 and faster she ran; round a promontory of rocks she wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head. Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem 15 of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens; and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by the early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness — saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and 20 her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds — saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying despair. The head, the diadem, the arm — these all had sunk; 25 at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried 30 child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by the treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed 5 by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains. "Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthwards to listen — "hush! — this either is the very 10 anarchy of strife, or else" — and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head — "or else, oh, heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

IV

Immediately, in trance, I was carried over land 15 and sea to some distant kingdom, and placed upon a triumphal car, amongst companions crowned with laurel. The darkness of gathering midnight, brooding over all the land, hid from us the mighty crowds that were weaving restlessly about ourselves 20 as a center: we heard them, but saw them not. Tidings had arrived, within an hour, of a grandeur that measured itself against centuries; too full of pathos they were, too full of joy, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless 25 anthems, and *Te Deums* reverberated from the choirs and orchestras of earth. These tidings we that sat upon the laureled car had it for our privilege to publish amongst all nations. And already,

by signs audible through the darkness, by snortings and trappings, our angry horses, that knew no fear or fleshly weariness, upbraided us with delay. Wherefore *was* it that we delayed? We waited for a secret word, that should bear witness to the 5 hope of nations as now accomplished forever. At midnight the secret word arrived; which word was — *Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!* The dreadful word shone by its own light; before us it went; high above our leaders' heads it rode, and spread 10 a golden light over the paths which we traversed. Every city, at the presence of the secret word, threw open its gates. The rivers were conscious as we crossed. All the forests, as we ran along their margins, shivered in homage to the secret word. 15 And the darkness comprehended it.

Two hours after midnight we approached a mighty Minster. Its gates, which rose to the clouds, were closed. But, when the dreadful word that rode before us reached them with its golden light, silently 20 they moved back upon their hinges, and at a flying gallop our equipage entered the grand aisle of the cathedral. Headlong was our pace; and at every altar, in the little chapels and oratories to the right hand and left of our course, the lamps, dying or 25 sickening, kindled anew in sympathy with the secret word that was flying past. Forty leagues we might have run in the cathedral, and as yet no strength of morning light had reached us, when before us we saw the aerial galleries of organ and choir. 30 Every pinnacle of fretwork, every station of advan-

tage amongst the traceries, was crested by white-robed choristers that sang deliverance; that wept no more tears, as once their fathers had wept; but at intervals that sang together to the generations,
 5 saying,

“Chant the deliverer’s praise in every tongue,”

and receiving answers from afar,

“Such as once in heaven and earth were sung.”

And of their chanting was no end; of our head-
 10 long pace was neither pause nor slackening.

Thus as we ran like torrents — thus as we swept with bridal rapture over the Campo Santo¹ of the cathedral graves — suddenly we became aware of a vast necropolis rising upon the far-off horizon —
 15 a city of sepulchers, built within the saintly cathedral for the warrior dead that rested from their feuds on earth. Of purple granite was the necropolis; yet, in the first minute, it lay like a purple stain upon the horizon, so mighty was the distance. In the
 20 second minute it trembled through many changes,

¹ “*Campo Santo*”: — It is probable that most of my readers will be acquainted with the history of the Campo Santo (or cemetery) at Pisa, composed of earth brought from Jerusalem for a bed of sanctity, as the highest prize which the noble piety of crusaders could ask or imagine. To readers who are unacquainted with England, or who (being English) are yet unacquainted with the cathedral cities of England, it may be right to mention that the graves within-side the cathedrals often form a flat pavement over which carriages and horses *might* run; and perhaps a boyish remembrance of one particular cathedral, across which I had seen passengers walk and burdens carried, as about two centuries back they were through the middle of St. Paul’s in London, may have assisted my dream.

growing into terraces and towers of wondrous altitude, so mighty was the pace. In the third minute already, with our dreadful gallop, we were entering its suburbs. Vast sarcophagi rose on every side, having towers and turrets that, upon the 5 limits of the central aisle, strode forward with haughty intrusion, that ran back with mighty shadows into answering recesses. Every sarcophagus showed many bas-reliefs — bas-reliefs of battles and of battlefields; battles from forgotten ages, 10 battles from yesterday; battlefields that, long since, nature had healed and reconciled to herself with the sweet oblivion of flowers; battlefields that were yet angry and crimson with carnage. Where the terraces ran, there did *we* run; where the towers 15 curved, there did *we* curve. With the flight of swallows our horses swept round every angle. Like rivers in flood wheeling round headlands, like hurricanes that ride into the secrets of forests, faster than ever light unwove the mazes of darkness, 20 our flying equipage carried earthly passions, kindled warrior instincts, amongst the dust that lay around us — dust oftentimes of our noble fathers that had slept in God from Crécy to Trafalgar. And now had we reached the last sarcophagus, now were we 25 abreast of the last bas-relief, already had we recovered the arrow-like flight of the illimitable central aisle, when coming up this aisle to meet us we beheld afar off a female child, that rode in a carriage as frail as flowers. The mists which went before 30 her hid the fawns that drew her, but could not hide

the shells and tropic flowers with which she played — but could not hide the lovely smiles by which she uttered her trust in the mighty cathedral, and in the cherubim that looked down upon her from the
5 mighty shafts of its pillars. Face to face she was meeting us; face to face she rode, as if danger there were none. “Oh, baby!” I exclaimed, “shalt thou be the ransom for Waterloo? Must we, that carry tidings of great joy to every people, be mes-
10 sengers of ruin to thee!” In horror I rose at the thought; but then, also, in horror at the thought rose one that was sculptured on a bas-relief — a Dying Trumpeter. Solemnly from the field of battle he rose to his feet; and, unslinging his stony
15 trumpet, carried it, in his dying anguish, to his stony lips — sounding once, and yet once again; proclamation that, in *thy* ears, oh, baby! spoke from the battlements of death. Immediately deep shadows fell between us, and aboriginal silence.
20 The choir had ceased to sing. The hoofs of our horses, the dreadful rattle of our harness, the groaning of our wheels, alarmed the graves no more. By horror the bas-relief had been unlocked unto life. By horror we, that were so full of life, we men and
25 our horses, with their fiery fore legs rising in mid air to their everlasting gallop, were frozen to a bas-relief. Then a third time the trumpet sounded; the seals were taken off all pulses; life, and the frenzy of life, tore into their channels again; again
30 the choir burst forth in sunny grandeur, as from the muffling of storms and darkness; again the thun-

derings of our horses carried temptation into the graves. One cry burst from our lips, as the clouds, drawing off from the aisle, showed it empty before us. — “Whither has the infant fled? — is the young child caught up to God?” Lo! afar off, in a vast 5 recess, rose three mighty windows to the clouds; and on a level with their summits, at height insuperable to man, rose an altar of purest alabaster. On its eastern face was trembling a crimson glory. A glory was it from the reddening dawn that now 10 streamed *through* the windows? Was it from the crimson robes of the martyrs painted *on* the windows? Was it from the bloody bas-reliefs of earth? There, suddenly, within that crimson radiance, rose the apparition of a woman’s head, and then of a woman’s 15 figure. The child it was — grown up to woman’s height. Clinging to the horns of the altar, voiceless she stood — sinking, rising, raving, despairing; and behind the volume of incense that, night and day, streamed upwards from the altar, dimly was 20 seen the fiery font, and the shadow of that dreadful being who should have baptized her with the baptism of death. But by her side was kneeling her better angel, that hid his face with wings; that wept and pleaded for *her*; that prayed when *she* 25 could *not*; that fought with Heaven by tears for *her* deliverance; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that from Heaven he had won at last.

V

Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals — gleaming amongst clouds and surges of incense — threw up,
5 as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering music. Choir and antechoir were filling fast with unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, and thy anguish that was finishing, didst enter the
10 tumult ; trumpet and echo — farewell love, and farewell anguish — rang through the dreadful *sanctus*. Oh, darkness of the grave ! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the angel's eye —
15 were these indeed thy children ? Pumps of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the festivals of Death ? Lo ! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral,
20 I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved with one step. Us, that, with laureled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they
25 wrapped us round with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together ; to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that fled ; rendering thanks to God in the highest — that, having

hid his face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace; rendering thanks for thee, young girl! whom having overshadowed with His ineffable 5 passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside His arm, and even in thee, sister unknown! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden forever, found an occasion to glorify His goodness. A thousand times, amongst the 10 phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee, with the armies of the grave behind thee, — seen thee sinking, rising, raving, despairing; a thousand times in the worlds of sleep 15 have I seen thee followed by God's angel through storms, through desert seas, through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams; only that at the last, with one sling of His victorious arm, He 20 might snatch thee back from ruin, and might emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrections of His love!

LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

OFTENTIMES at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be
5 angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the newborn infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness, — typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man everywhere, and of that benignity
10 in powers invisible which even in Pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. *That* might bear dif-
15 ferent interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look
20 erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying, perhaps, in his heart, “Behold what is greater than yourselves!” This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her
25 face (except to me in dreams), but always acted

by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the edu- 5 cation of the nursery. She, that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She therefore watches 10 over human education. Now, the word *edŭco*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified in the crystallization of languages) from the word *edŭco*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *educes*, or develops, *edu-* 15 *cates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant, — not the poor machinery that moves by spelling books and grammars, but by that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temp- 20 tation, by the energies of resistance, works forever upon children, — resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like restless spokes, are glimmering¹ forever as they revolve. 25

¹ As I have never allowed myself to covet any man's ox nor his ass, nor anything that is his, still less would it become a philosopher to covet other people's images or metaphors. Here, therefore, I restore to Mr. Wordsworth this fine image of the revolving wheel, and the glimmering spokes, as applied by him to the flying successions of day and night. I borrowed it for one moment in order to point my own sentence ; which being done, the reader is witness that I now pay it back instantly by a note made for that

If, then, *these* are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader! think,—that children generally are not liable to grief such
 5 as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally*, — the sense of Euclid, where it means *universally* (or in the whole extent of the *genus*), and a foolish sense of this world, where it means *usually*. Now, I am far from saying that children
 10 universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *foundation* should be there twelve years:
 15 he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of
 20 that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often communes with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. "These ladies," said I
 25 softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows;

sole purpose. On the same principle I often borrow their seals from young ladies, when closing my letters, because there is sure to be some tender sentiment upon them about "memory," or "hope," or "roses," or "reunion," and my correspondent must be a sad brute who is not touched by the eloquence of the seal, even if his taste is so bad that he remains deaf to mine.

and they are three in number; as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty: the *Parcæ* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and 5 black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called from the other side of the grave offenses that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned 10 creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now*; but in Oxford I said, "one of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark back-15 ground of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters — by what names shall we call them?

If I say simply "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be under-20 stood of individual sorrow — separate cases of sorrow, — whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersona-25 tions, that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow*. I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysteri-30 ous household; and their paths are wide apart;

but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? O, no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities
 5 of language. They may utter voices through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound; eternal silence reigns in *their* kingdoms. *They* spoke not, as they talked with Levana; *they* whis-
 10 pered not; *they* sang not; though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung: for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their
 15 pleasure not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven, by changes on earth, by pulses in secret rivers, heraldries painted on darkness, and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. *They* wheeled in mazes; *I* spelled
 20 the steps. *They* telegraphed from afar; *I* read the signals. *They* conspired together; and on the mirrors of darkness *my* eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols; *mine* are the words.

What is it the sisters are? What is it that they
 25 do? Let me describe their form and their presence, if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline, or presence it were that forever advanced to the front or forever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachry-*
 30 *marum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished

faces. She stood in Rama where a voice was heard of lamentation — Rachel weeping for her children, and refused to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet 5 were stiffened forever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtile, wild and sleepy 10 by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds, oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds when she heard that sobbing of litanies or the 15 thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sat all last summer by the bed-20 side of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. 25 For this did God send her a great reward. In the springtime of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, he recalled her to himself. But her blind father mourns forever over *her*; still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding 30 hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens

to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing before his
 5 eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women,
 10 sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the firstborn of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of "Madonna."

The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*,
 15 Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtile; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with
 20 perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops forever, forever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals.
 25 Her sister Madonna is oftentimes stormy and frantic, raging in the highest against heaven, and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers
 30 is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she

may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bonds- 5 man to the oar in the Mediterranean galleys; of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England; of the baffled penitent reverting his eyes forever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems 10 the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to 15 the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother, — as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered;¹ every woman 20 sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illuminate her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social 25 necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; every nun de-

¹ This, the reader will be aware, applies chiefly to the cotton and tobacco states of North America; but not to them only : on which account I have not scrupled to figure the sun which looks down upon slavery as *tropical*—no matter if strictly within the tropics, or simply so near to them as to produce a similar climate,

5 frauded of her unreturning May time by wicked
 kinsmen, whom God will judge; every captive
 in every dungeon; all that are betrayed, and all
 that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law,
 10 and children of *hereditary* disgrace,— all these walk
 with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key;
 but she needs it little, for her kingdom is chiefly
 amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless
 vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest
 15 ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and
 even in glorious England there are some that, to
 the world, carry their heads as proudly as the rein-
 deer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon
 their foreheads.

15 But the third sister, who is also the youngest —
 Hush! whisper whilst we talk of *her*! Her king-
 dom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but
 within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head,
 turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond
 20 the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes
 rising so high *might* be hidden by distance. But,
 being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through
 the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce
 light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins
 25 or for vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for
 ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the
 very ground. She is the defier of God. She also
 is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of
 suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but
 30 narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can
 approach only those in whom a profound nature

has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady 5 of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to 10 enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*, Our Lady of Darkness.

These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses,¹ these were the *Eumenides*, or Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering pro-15 pitiation), of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs; and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this: 20

"Lo! here is he whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he become idolatrous; and through 25 me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshiped the worm and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy

¹ "*Sublime goddesses*": The word *σεμνος* is usually rendered *venerable*, in dictionaries, — not a very flattering epithet for females. But by weighing a number of passages in which the word is used pointedly, I am disposed to think that it comes nearest to our idea of the *sublime* — as near as a Greek word *could* come.

was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness;
 saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolator,
 I have seasoned for thee, dear, gentle Sister of Sighs!
 Do thou take him now to *thy* heart, and season him
 5 for our dreadful sister. And thou," turning to the
Mater Tenebrarum, she said, "wicked sister, that,
 tempest and hatest, do thou take him from *her*.
 See that thy scepter lie heavy on his head. Suffer
 not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in
 10 his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope, wither
 the relenting of love, scorch the fountains of tears,
 curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he
 be accomplished in the furnace, so shall he see the
 things that ought *not* to be seen, sights that are
 15 abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So
 shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths,
 fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies.
 And so shall our commission be accomplished which
 from God we had — to plague his heart until we
 20 had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."

NOTES

JOAN OF ARC

Introductory Note. This essay was first published in 1847, in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, in the March and August numbers. In the intervening numbers several other articles by De Quincey appeared, among them *The Nautico-Military Nun of Spain*. Many changes were made in the essay when it was revised for the *Collective Edition* of 1854, the changes being mainly in the excision of irrelevant matter that often ran into unmitigated nonsense. De Quincey once remarked autobiographically, "Both Lamb and myself had a furious love for nonsense — head-long nonsense." Even after a scrupulous revision, the essays in this volume amply justify this remark, as far as it applies to De Quincey himself. Some of his changes are described in the notes, to illustrate his self-criticism.

De Quincey was the first writer to present, in an imaginative way, a sane and true picture of Joan of Arc, and the sympathetic interest in the subject induced by the essay has somewhat obscured its artistic defects. "The paper," says R. Brimley Johnson, "is almost perfect." Nearer to the truth is Masson's critical summary: "It is the passages of fine lyrical prose at the opening and the close of the paper that chiefly recommend it now and cause it to be remembered as De Quincey's. A good deal of the intermediate matter (of facetious disputation with M. Michelet, and what not) may seem unpleasantly out of key."

Some standard historical account of *Joan of Arc* should be read in connection with the study of this essay. Michelet's account may be read in the translations by G. H. Smith and Walter K. Kelley of the *History of France*, Book X, Chap-

ters 3 and 4. Kitchin's *History of France* may also be used, Mrs. Oliphant's *Jeanne D'Arc*, F. C. Lowell's *Joan of Arc*, and Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles*. Much interest will be added by comparing the imaginative treatment of the subject in Southey's *Joan of Arc*, Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans*, and Voltaire's *La Pucelle*, all of which, however, like Shakspeare's *Henry VI*, present very inadequate conceptions of the character of the noble heroine. Interest and profit will be found in Mark Twain's (Samuel L. Clemens) *Joan of Arc*.

De Quincey's original footnotes have been retained with the text in this volume of selections, just as the author left them in his revised edition.

22 : 4. By an act. See 1 Samuel xvii.

10. From a station of good will. From a friendly point of view. The word *station* here appears to be used in the surveyor's sense, "the place selected for planting the instrument with which an observation is to be made." — *Century Dictionary*.

17. Scepter was departing from Judah. Cf. Genesis xlix. 10.

20. Sang together with the songs. A peculiar expression, probably an echo of scriptural phrases, as in Isaiah lii. 9, and Job xxxviii. 7.

21. Domrémy. More generally called Domrémy-la-Pucelle, in honor of Joan of Arc. The house in which she was born is preserved as a national relic. Near it is a handsome monument with a colossal statue of the heroine. A chapel has also been built to her memory.

23 : 6. Apparitors. The summoners, or attendants upon the officers of an ecclesiastical court.

7. En contumace. In contumacy, contempt of court; a French legal term denoting the position of one who, when summoned to answer charges before the court, does not appear.

8. As yet may happen. Already "universal France" has practically accepted Joan of Arc as a national heroine. Her fame could hardly be more exalted, unless she were canonized by the Church; this, however, is not probable with the present condition of the Church in France. Her sentence was revoked by decree of the Pope in 1456, and since then the genuineness of her inspiration has been accepted by Roman Catholic writers.

26. **Rouen.** A city on the Seine in Normandy, where Joan was martyred.

24 : 10. **Lilies of France.** The lily, or fleur-de-lis (flower of the lily), is said to have been the royal emblem of France from the time of Clovis. The Revolution of 1789-1793 caused the royal lily to "wither," when Louis XVI was beheaded, and the people for a time ruled the kingdom.

18. **But stay.** The original article in *Tait's Magazine* has, "But stop."

25. **Jules Michelet** [meesh-lā'] (1798-1874). A French historian, professor of history in the College of France. His principal works are *History of France*, *History of the French Revolution*, *Women of the Revolution*, and several books of a poetical and speculative character, such as *The Bird*, *The Insect*, *The Sea*, and *Woman*. His writings are especially remarkable for their brilliancy of style. Upon the preparation of his chief work, the *History of France*, he is said to have spent forty years. An available translation of this work is that of G. H. Smith, 2 vols.

27. "As mad as a March hare," is a very old saying. In the month of March hares are unusually wild and excitable.

28. **Recovered liberty.** An allusion, apparently, to the minor revolution of 1830, by which the restored Bourbons were expelled. *Their mighty revolution* is, of course, the great one of 1789 and Napoleon. The one to the other is as *laughing-gas* to *wine*.

25 : 11. **His worst book.** A translation of the work, *Priests, Women, and Families*, had been published in London the year before. After the next sentence De Quincey originally added, "M. Michelet was light-headed, I believe, when he wrote it, and it is well that his keepers overtook him in time to intercept a second part."

18. **Falconer's lure.** A decoy used to recall the hawk to his perch on the fist ; sometimes an artificial bird, with meat attached, which strongly attracts the hawk when it is swung in the air by the falconer, with a peculiar whistle or call.

26 : 3. **Chevy Chase.** De Quincey parodies the opening lines of the old ballad of *Chevy Chase*, not of the familiar version in *Percy's Reliques*, but of the "enfeebled edition" current in the

printed broadsides of the seventeenth century. This is given in the *Child Collection*, and in the abridged edition, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads (Cambridge Edition)*, p. 397.

“The stout Erle of Northumberland
a vow to God did make
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
three sommers days to take.”

15. **Asbestos.** A form of hornblende consisting of fine crystalline fibers, with a silky luster, which may be woven into cloth. It is said that the ancients wrapped the bodies of their dead in asbestos cloth, to keep their ashes separate from those of the funeral pile. Charlemagne, says legend, was wont to astonish his guests by throwing his asbestos tablecloth into the fire after dinner.

25. **La Pucelle.** “The Maid,” or “The Virgin”; the common French designation for Joan of Arc, called *Maid of Orleans* because Orleans was the scene of her first great victory over the English.

30. **Collection now forthcoming.** The reference is to Quicherat's *Procès de Condamnation et de Réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc*, 5 vols., 1841-1849. See Murray's *Jeanne D'Arc*, New York, 1902.

27 : 15. **Hannibal.** The famous Carthaginian general, who when nine years old was made by his father, Hamilcar, to swear eternal enmity to Rome. In 217 B.C. he led a vast army across the Alps, and for a time threatened the empire with total destruction. In 183 B.C. he took poison to escape falling into the hands of his old enemies.

16. **Mithridates.** A ferocious king of Pontus, who for many years waged war against the Romans. In the last war against Pompey, 66 B.C., his son Pharnaces having rebelled, Mithridates, after attempting ineffectually to poison himself, ordered one of his Gallic mercenaries to dispatch him with his sword.

23. **Delenda est Anglia Victrix.** “Victorious England must be destroyed:” suggested by the famous words with which the elder Cato is said to have ended all his speeches, “*Delenda est Carthago.*”

28. **Hyder Ali.** One of the most powerful princes of India, Sultan of the state of Mysore. The defeat and death of his son Tippoo Sahib occurred in 1799.

28 : 10. **Suffren.** A French admiral, who in 1780 captured twelve merchant-ships from the British, and in 1781 defeated the British commodore Johnstone. In the original article in *Tait's* the name is spelled *Suffrein*.

16. **Magnanimous justice of Englishmen.** De Quincey could not have had Shakspere's *1 Henry VI* in mind when writing this line. Fuller, in his *Holy and Profane State*, included Joan of Arc among the examples of the "Profane State." Admitting that the great doctors disagreed as to some of her acts, he gives two facts that for himself are quite conclusive, namely, "going in man's clothes, flatly against scripture," and "shaved her hair in the fashion of a friar, against God's express word."

29 : 1. **Marches.** An old French word for the *border* or *frontier* of a country. Cf. p. 36, l. 25. See map of France in the fifteenth century.

18. **The cis and the trans.** Latin *on this side* and *on the other side*.

29. **St. Andrew's Cross.** Called in Latin *cruz decussata*, decussate cross. Upon a cross of this form St. Andrew, the apostle, is supposed to have been crucified.

30 : 13. **Odious man.** Later in the essay De Quincey explains his "systematic hatred of D'Arc," p. 39.

31 : 1. **Crécy** (Eng., *Cressy*). This famous battle was fought in 1346 between the English under Edward III and the Black Prince and the French under Philip VI; 1200 knights, the flower of French chivalry, and 30,000 footmen were slain. It marks the downfall of feudalism. The knights on horseback in glittering armor, in spite of their traditional prowess, could not cope with the English foot-soldiers, mere yeomen, armed with the bow.

2. **Agincourt** [aj'in-kört]. This victory was won by Henry V in 1415. The French lost 10,000 men, including many princes and nobles.

Nicopolis. The allied armies of Hungary, Poland, and France, under King Sigismund, were signally defeated at this place in 1396 by the Sultan Bajazet.

32 : 8. **Poictiers** (or *Poitiers*) [poi-têrz']. Here in 1356 Ed-

ward the Black Prince, with 8000 men, defeated a French army of about 50,000 men, and captured the king, John the Good.

Withering overthrows, etc. "The lesson that England learned at Bannockburn she taught the world at Cressy. The whole social and political fabric of the Middle Ages rested on a military base, and its base was suddenly withdrawn. The churl had struck down the noble; the bondsman proved more than a match in sheer hard fighting for the knight. From the day of Cressy feudalism tottered slowly but surely to its grave." — GREEN'S *A Short History of the English People*.

18. **The poor king.** Charles VI reigned nominally from 1380 to 1422. He became deranged in 1392, and the rivalry of his uncles, who seized the reins of government, brought on civil war. Henry V of England, taking advantage of the intestine troubles, invaded France, won the battle of Agincourt, and secured a treaty which stipulated that he should become king of France on the death of Charles, thus depriving his son, the dauphin, of his rightful inheritance.

33:1. **Some ancient prophetic doom.** As presented, for example, in the great Greek tragedies; such was the legend of *Oedipus*, used by Sophocles.

The famines, the extraordinary diseases. There were terrible famines in France and England in the first half of the fourteenth century. But more terrible was the mysterious disease called the "Black Death," which swept over all Europe during the same century. It appeared in Provence in the south of France, in 1347, and destroyed two thirds of the inhabitants of that province. Froissart records the event laconically: "At this time there prevailed throughout the world a disease called epidemic, which destroyed a third of its inhabitants."

2. **Insurrections of the peasantry.** Such as the rising of the peasants in France in 1358, known as the Insurrection of the *Jacquerie*, and Wat Tyler's rebellion in England in 1381.

6. **Termination of the Crusades.** The ninth and last crusade was undertaken in 1270, in which the royal saint, Louis IX, perished, the most sincere and noble of the great crusading leaders. The crusades were an utter failure, so far as the main object, the recovery of Jerusalem, was concerned, and the Christian world was much depressed by the increasing power

of Mohammedanism ; the ultimate benefits of the Crusades to Western civilization, as the breaking up of feudalism, the abolition of serfdom, the extension of commerce, the building up of the separate states of Europe, could not be foreseen.

7. Destruction of the Templars. The celebrated "Order of the Templars," or "Knights of the Temple," was organized at Jerusalem in 1117, for the purpose of protecting pilgrims ; so called because their lodging was in a palace near the temple. The number was at first limited to nine ; but in time the order spread throughout Europe, becoming very wealthy, corrupt, and powerful. In 1312 many of its leaders were burned at the stake and the order abolished by decree of the Pope.

8. Papal interdicts. "De Quincey has probably in mind such an interdict as that pronounced in 1200, by Innocent III, against France. All ecclesiastical functions were suspended and the land was in desolation." — HART.

9. The house of Anjou was an old and powerful one, numbering among its dukes and their descendants many royal personages. From this house sprung the royal house of Plantagenet in England. The early Angevins were especially famous for their monstrous deeds. After the assassination of Charles of Durazzo in Hungary, in 1385, Louis of Anjou seized the throne of Naples, but was soon expelled by Ladislaus, son of Durazzo. The cruelties of Charles of Anjou in Sicily caused the terrible uprising in 1282 known as the Sicilian Vespers, in which thousands of French people were massacred.

And by the Emperor. The Emperor Conradin, in 1268, attempted to recover the Two Sicilies from the usurper, Charles of Anjou, but was captured by Charles and beheaded. It was the treachery of the Emperor Sigismund that led to the burning of John Huss, in 1415, and the cruel and desolating Hussite war. The irresponsible absolutism of the Emperors was thus interpreted : "No laws can bind this Emperor, though he may choose to live according to them ; none may presume to arraign the conduct or question the motives of him who is answerable only to God."

17. A double Pope. In 1378 two popes were chosen, Urban VI and Clement VII ; the one held court at Rome, and the other at Avignon. For 38 years there were two rival popes,

hurling anathemas and foulest accusations at each other, like "two dogs snarling over a bone," said Wyclif. In 1402 there were even three recognized popes; but in 1418 a General Council deposed all three, and ended the "great schism."

21. **Those vast rents.** The Protestant Reformation in Germany and in England. The earlier troubles of the Church were but preparations, rehearsals, for these greater tribulations. De Quincey does not often mix metaphors as much as in this sentence. The sentence reads in *Tait's*: "She was already rehearsing, as in still earlier forms she had rehearsed, the first rent in her foundations (reserved for the coming century) which no man should ever heal."

34 : 24. **Miserere.** A musical composition for the 51st Psalm, which in Latin begins with the word *Miserere*, — Have mercy; usually appointed in the Roman Catholic Church for penitential acts.

25. **Te Deum.** An old Latin hymn of which the first words are *Te Deum laudamus*, — We praise thee, O God; sung in services of public thanksgiving.

35 : 18. **Abbeys there were, etc.** Turk quotes Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*, second part: —

"Temples like those among the Hindoos,
And mosques, and spires, and abbey windows,
And castles all with ivy green."

21. **German Diets.** The Imperial Parliament, or Diet, was composed of three houses, the Seven Electors, the Princes, lay and ecclesiastical, and the Free Imperial Cities. Three of the Prince Electors were the Archbishops of Treves, Mayence, and Cologne.

36 : 3. **Except in 1813.** Another exception now is 1870, when in the Franco-Prussian War the Vosges were the scene of much fighting, and great disasters to the French.

17. **Those mysterious fawns.** "In some of the romances of the Middle Ages, especially those containing Celtic material, a knight, while hunting, is led by his pursuit of a white fawn (or a white stag or boar) to a *fée* (*i.e.* an inhabitant of the 'Happy Other-world') or into the confines of the 'Happy Other-world' itself." We are indebted to Professor M. H. Turk

for this explanation, as also for the reference furnishing the next note.

19. **That ancient stag.** "This chasing of the white doe or the white hart by the spectral huntsman has assumed various forms. According to Aristotle a white hart was killed by Agathocles, King of Sicily, which a thousand years beforehand had been consecrated to Diana by Diomedes. Alexander the Great is said by Pliny to have caught a white stag, placed a collar of gold about its neck, and afterwards set it free. Succeeding heroes have in after days been announced as the capturers of this famous white hart. Julius Cæsar took the place of Alexander, and Charlemagne caught a white hart at both Magdeburg, and in the Holstein woods." — HARDWICKE's *Traditions, Superstitions, and Folk-Lore*, p. 154.

26. **A marquis.** A *march* was the frontier or boundary of a country, and originally the officer charged with the guarding of the frontier was called a *marquis*.

37 : 5. **Sir Roger de Coverley.** Addison's charming hero, who, in *Spectator* paper No. 122, decides the dispute between his two friends about the fishing by telling them, "with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that much might be said on both sides."

38 : 3. **Bergereta.** Latin form of the French *bergerette*, a shepherd girl.

12. **M. Simond.** Louis Simond's *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the years 1810 and 1811*, with an appendix on France, written in 1815 and 1816. De Quincey was much impressed by the horror of this story, for he refers to it more than once.

29. **Prædial.** From Lat. *prædium*, a farm ; hence, attached to land or farms.

39 : 14. **Friday.** Robinson Crusoe's "man" Friday.

27. **St. Louis.** Louis IX, the "Royal Saint" and leader of the Eighth Crusade. His religion was that of an anchorite, his government that of exact justice. "He was," says Voltaire, "in all respects a model for men." The Order of St. Louis was instituted by Louis XIV for military service. *Chevalier* was the title of lowest rank in such an order.

"Chevalier, have you fed the hog?" "My daughter, have

you fed the hog?" "Maid of Orleans, have you saved the royal lilies?"

40: 4. If the man that turnips cries. Dr. Johnson's parody of some verses of Lopez de Vega, given in Napier's *Johnsoniana*, among Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Johnson*.

14. Oriflamme. The ancient royal standard of France; a red flag, deeply split into flame-shaped streamers, and borne on a gilded lance. From Lat. *aurum*, gold, and *flamma*, a flame.

41: 3. Robert Southey (1774-1843). One of the "Lake School" of poets, and Poet Laureate, a multitudinous writer of both prose and verse. *Joan of Arc*, his first long poem, is a blank-verse poem in ten books, readable but not poetical. De Quincey's opinion of the poem will be found in his essay on *Charles Lamb*. Southey lived near De Quincey in the neighboring village of Keswick.

5. The story. Michelet's account is as follows: "At last the King received her, and surrounded by all the splendor of his court, in the hope, apparently, of disconcerting her. It was evening; the light of fifty torches illumined the hall, and a brilliant array of nobles and above three hundred knights were assembled round the monarch. Every one was curious to see the sorceress, or, as it might be, the inspired maid. . . . She entered the splendid circle with all humility, 'like a poor little shepherdess,' distinguished at the first glance the King, who had purposely kept himself amidst the crowd of courtiers; and although at first he maintained that he was not the King, she fell down and embraced his knees. But as he had not been crowned, she only styled him dauphin: 'Gentle dauphin,' she addressed him, 'my name is Jeanne la Pucelle. The King of heaven sends you word by me that you shall be consecrated and crowned in the city of Rheims, and shall be lieutenant of the King of heaven, who is King of France.'"

12. Coup d'essai. Fr., first trial.

19. "Pricking for sheriffs" is the annual ceremony of appointing sheriffs for each county. A list of persons qualified to serve is sent to the sovereign, "who, without looking at it, strikes a bodkin amongst the names, and he whose name is pierced is elected."

22. Happy lady of the islands and the orient. Victoria

was Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and, after 1876, Empress of India.

42 : 15. **Un peu fort.** A little strong.

43 : 1. **Sacred ampulla.** The sacred ampulla of Rheims was a glass flask filled with holy oil, according to tradition, brought from heaven by a dove at the coronation of Clovis, in 496. The kings of France down to Louis XVI were anointed with this oil. The flask was destroyed in the Revolution, a piece with a little oil being saved, which was exhausted in anointing Charles X.

3. **The English boy.** Henry V died in 1422, a few weeks before the death of Charles VI, for whose throne he had bargained. His son, Henry VI, who had been proclaimed king at Paris when about nine months old, was now eight years old.

6. **Ovens of Rheims.** Tradition and superstition required that all kings of France should be crowned at Rheims. The bakeries of Rheims were famous for their biscuits and cakes. Hart thinks De Quincey had in mind some French popular saying, but more likely his frisky mind was merely indulging its usual pleasantry. After the words, *France along with him*, the original article reads thus: "Trouble us not, lawyer, with your quillets. We are illegal blockheads, so thoroughly without law that we don't know even if we have a right to be blockheads; and our mind is made up—that the first man drawn from the oven of coronation at Rheims is the man that is baked into a king. All others are counterfeits made of base Indian meal—damaged by sea-water."

21. **Matthew Tindal.** A deistical writer whose book here mentioned appeared in 1730. De Quincey is prodding Southey for attributing to Joan a deistical speech, the substance of which is taken from Tindal's book, published three centuries after Joan lived.

22. **A parte ante.** From a part gone before.

24. **Cottle, Bristol.** Joseph Cottle, publisher and bookseller of Bristol, who published *Joan* in 1796; the friend of Southey and Coleridge, something of a poet himself, and the author of *Reminiscences of Coleridge and Southey*.

27. **Nor 3d, Confession.** Between this sentence and the next in the original article in *Tait's* were several lines of De

Quinceyish nonsense, typical of many passages, the suppression of which in the revision of 1854 shows the improvement with age of De Quincey's taste. The passage is worth reproducing as an illustration of his writing at its worst: "Here's a precious windfall for the doctors; they, by snaky tortuosities, had hoped, through the aid of a corkscrew (which every D.D. or S.T.D. is said to carry in his pocket), for the happiness of ultimately extracting from Joanna a few grains of heretical powder, or small shot, which might have justified their singeing her a little. And just at such a crisis, expressly to justify their burning her to a cinder, up gallops Joanna with a brigade of guns, unlimbers, and serves them out with heretical grape and deistical round-shot enough to lay a kingdom under interdict. Any miracles to which Joanna might treat the D.D.'s after *that*, would go to the wrong side of her little account in the clerical books. Joanna would be created a *Dr.* herself, but not of divinity. For in the Joanna page of the ledger the entry would be: 'Miss Joanna, in acct. with the Church, *Dr.* by sundry diabolic miracles, she having publicly preached heresy, shown herself a witch, and even tried to corrupt the principles of six Church pillars.'"

30. **Both trials.** That of condemnation, 1431, and of rehabilitation, 1455. The *best witness* was Haumette.

44 : 9. **That divine passage.** *Paradise Regained*, Book I, 196-206.

29. **France Delivered.** In imitation of *Jerusalem Delivered*, Tasso's great epic of the Crusades.

46 : 11. **Coup-de-main.** Fr., stroke of hand; a military term, denoting a sudden and rapid attack.

18. **Excepting one man.** What man De Quincey has in mind is not clear, but quite likely Maçon, president of the council. Her strong supporter at first was the Duc d'Alençon. According to popular accounts, Dunois, the bastard, was her chief admirer, whom Schiller in his *Jungfrau* represents as in love with her.

48 : 13. **Nolebat**, etc. "She did not wish to use her sword, or to kill any one."

49 : 18. Michelet argues that there *was* "treacherous collusion." "The probability is that the Pucelle was bargained for

and bought." Her captor sold her to the Duke of Burgundy, and the duke sold her to the English.

24. **Bishop of Beauvais.** Pierre Cauchon, rector of the University of Paris, who had been expelled from his bishopric of Beauvais (forty-three miles from Paris) as a traitor. He sold himself to the English for the promise of an archbishopric.

27. An echo of the witches' words in *Macbeth*: "Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be what thou art promised." Act I, iii and v.

30. **Triple crown.** The Pope's crown consists of a high cap, or tiara, of golden cloth, encircled by three coronets, and surmounted by a ball and cross of gold. The second coronet was added to indicate the prerogatives of spiritual and temporal power. The third was added (probably by Urban V, 1362) to indicate the Trinity.

50 : 19. **Judges examining the prisoner against himself.** In the French courts the judge questions searchingly the prisoner before he is brought to regular trial, a method almost universally condemned outside of France.

51 : 13. **Wretched Dominican.** The Dominicans were an order of mendicant friars called *Fratres Predicatores*, "Preaching Friars," established in France in 1216 by the Spaniard Domingo de Guzman, called St. Dominic. De Quincey has in mind the preliminary examination at Poitiers, when a Dominican said to Jeanne that if God willed to deliver France he had no need of men-at-arms, to which she replied, "The men-at-arms will do battle, and God will give the victory."

20. **Mahometan metaphysics.** According to which God works out his purposes without the use of human means.

52 : 12. **For a less cause than martyrdom.** Cf. Genesis ii. 24.

53 : 29. **Rising even now in Paris.** Referring to the publication of the documents of the trial. See note, p. 27, 29.

54 : 8. **Bringing together from the four winds, etc.** Cf. Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-10.

22. **Tellurians.** Dwellers upon earth ; Lat. *tellus*, the earth.

26. **Luxor.** A palace temple forming a part of the ruins of Thebes in Egypt. Of the temple of Karnak, another part of these ruins, Fergusson says, "It is perhaps the noblest effort of architectural magnificence ever produced by the hand of man."

55 : 13. Marie Antoinette. The queen of Louis XVI, daughter of Francis I, Emperor of Germany, who, as head of the "Holy Roman Empire," could be regarded as a successor to the Roman Cæsars. For an account of the career of this brilliant and ill-starred queen, consult histories of the French Revolution.

19. Charlotte Corday. Daughter of a Norman nobleman ; deeply impressed by the atrocities of the Reign of Terror, she made her way to Paris, assassinated Marat, and was immediately after guillotined, July 17, 1793.

In the original article De Quincey included another heroine of the Revolution, "How if it were the 'martyred wife of Roland,' uttering impassioned truth—truth odious to the rulers of her country—with her expiring breath."

56 : 28. Grafton. Richard Grafton's *Chronicle at large and meere History of the Affayres of Englande and Kinges of the same*, from the creation to the date of publication, appeared in 1569. According to this fair-minded Englishman, Joan with the "foule face" (ugly) was a "devilish witch, and a fanaticall Enchanteresse," who was "borne in Burgoyne, in a towne called Droymy besyde Vaucolour, which was a greate space a Chamberlein in a common Hostrey, and was a Rompe of such boldnesse that she would course horses, and ride them to water, and do thinges, that other young maydens both abhorred and were ashamed to do. . . . She (as a monster) was sent to the Dolphyn . . . rehersying to him visions, traunces and fables, full of blasphemie, superstition, and hypocrisye, that I marveyle much that wise men dyd believe her, and learned clerkes would write such phantasyes."

57 : 1. Holinshed. Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587) has the particular fame of having furnished Shakspeare with the facts for his English historical plays.

His "pleasing testimony" is as follows : "A young wench of an eightene yeeres old, called Jone Arc. Of favour was she counted likesome, of person stronglie made and manlie, of courage great, hardie, and stout withall, an understander of counsels though she were not at them, great semblance of chastitie both of bodie and behaviour, the name of Jesus in her

mouth about all her businesses, humble, obedient, and fasting diverse daies in the weeke."

De Quincey was too eager to score a point against Michelet, for beyond the above passage Holinshed is as rancorous as Grafton. His quaint summary of the last scene of Joan's life is worth quoting, "Upon a further definitive sentence declared against hir to be relapse and a renouncer of hir oth and repentance, was she thereupon delivered over to secular power, and so executed by consumption of fire in the old market place of Rone, in the self same steed where now saint Michaels church stands, hir ashes afterward without the towne wals shaken into the wind."

THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH

Introductory Note. In *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* for October, 1849, there appeared an unsigned article entitled *The English Mail Coach, or the Glory of Motion*. There was no indication that this article was to be followed by others upon the same topic, but in the December number of the magazine appeared an article in two sections, with the titles *The Vision of Sudden Death* and *Dream-Fugue, on the above theme of Sudden Death*. In an introductory paragraph the author explained the connection of this article with the preceding one. "The ultimate object," he says, "was the Dream-Fugue, as an attempt to wrestle with the utmost efforts of music in dealing with a colossal form of impassioned horror." In 1854, when De Quincey revised these papers for the *Collective Edition* of his works, he printed them under the one general title, *The English Mail Coach*, divided as at present into three sections with sub-titles.

A comparison of the text of the original with that of the revised papers affords an exceedingly interesting and valuable lesson in the art of literary workmanship. It reveals De Quincey as a most scrupulous and laborious critic of himself. More than seven hundred changes and corrections were made in the text of these three brief papers. Whole passages, too rambling and digressive, were cut out bodily; other passages were entirely rewritten, such, for example, as the description

of the Cyclopean driver, and the last section of the *Fugue*; words, phrases, and sentences were added to heighten the musical effects by refining and amplifying the rhythmic movement, and sometimes merely to touch up a humorous picture; on every page words were changed for more precise, emphatic, or euphonious synonyms; for example, such substitutions as *special* for *extra*, *relative* for *relation*, *intellect* for *mind*, *yet* for *but*, *impassioned* for *awakened*, *made no answer* for *said nothing*, *since* for *for*, *evidently* for *quite*; and in nearly every one of these changes there is an obvious gain in artistic perfectness. No poet ever refined his lines with a more sensitive and discriminating taste. Some of these changes have been included in the notes, enough to illustrate the care with which De Quincey's finished products were elaborated.

68: 2. Mr. Palmer. John Palmer was for many years proprietor of the Theatre Royal, in the city of Bath. Experiencing much difficulty in securing the prompt appearance of the actors at his theater, who journeyed from city to city by slow and irregular stage coaches, he conceived a scheme for establishing a system of government mail coaches that should carry a limited number of passengers, make close connections, and run at a rate of speed not less than ten miles an hour. With the aid of the great Pitt, the plan was inaugurated, and the first mail coach left London, August 8, 1784. Mr. Palmer was appointed Comptroller-General of the Post-Office, was elected a member of Parliament from Bath, and finally was enriched by large sums of money received from the government as compensation for his services in promoting the public welfare.

7. Daughter of a duke. In a footnote De Quincey gives the name as "Lady Madeline Gordon." Masson notes a mistake here; De Quincey apparently confused John Palmer with Charles Palmer, of Lockley Park, Berks, to whom Lady Madelina Gordon, second daughter of Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon, was married in 1805. The *National Dictionary of Biography* states that John Palmer married a Miss Pratt, "probably a relative of his friend, Lord Camden."

69: 8. National result. With this passage should be read a passage in the *Autobiography*, Chap. XII, *Travelling in England in the Old Days*, Masson's Ed., Vol. I, 270.

23. **Apocalyptic vials.** Cf. Revelation xvi.

24. The battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805, in which Nelson won his last victory; Salamanca, in Spain, where Wellington defeated the French, July 22, 1812; Vittoria, in Spain, the scene of another of Wellington's victories, June 21, 1813; the battle of Waterloo, June 18, 1815, in which Napoleon was finally defeated by the English under Wellington.

70:9. **Crisis of general prostration.** For more than twenty years all Europe had been prostrated by the sweeping victories of Napoleon.

21. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge are composed of many separate colleges, united in a kind of federation with a central or general government, very much like the federation of free states composing the United States, subject to certain limitations of a general government. Each college has its own faculty, but all degrees are conferred by the University.

27. **Michaelmas, Lent, Easter, and Act.** The names of the college terms at Oxford, corresponding respectively to fall, winter, spring, and summer term. *Michaelmas* is the church festival celebrated September 29. *Act* was a name applied originally to the public disputation or thesis required for the degree of Master or Doctor; hence it came to be applied to that part of the scholastic year in which degrees were conferred. This term was also called *Trinity*, and the winter term *Hilary*, from *St. Hilary*, an eminent church father, whose feast day was January 13.

71:1. **Going down.** The usual English phrase, when going from London or Oxford into the country; similarly a journey from the country to the city, is "going up to London."

16. **Posting-houses.** See De Quincey's description of the post-houses in the *Autobiography*, Masson's Ed., Vol. I, 279.

25. **An old tradition.** At first no passengers were carried on the outside; then servants and poor people occupied outside seats at a low price.

72:1. **Attaint.** A legal term. A person convicted of high crime is "attaint," *i.e.* is deprived of the privileges of a free citizen, and the consequences of this "corruption of the blood" are visited upon his descendants unless the *attainder* is removed by act of Parliament. See p. 81, l. 11.

6. **Pariahs.** In India the Pariah is a member of a caste, or social class, far below the regular Brahmins, by whom he is shunned as unclean; hence, generally, a Pariah is an out-cast from society.

23. **Salle-à-manger.** Hall for eating, dining hall.

73 : 8. **Same logical construction.** In a footnote De Quincey indicates that he is here paraphrasing a Roman legal maxim: "De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est lex."

14. **Questionable characters.** In the original *Blackwood* article, this was *suspicious characters*, and *by voluntarily going outside* was substituted for *voluntarily*.

17. **Raff.** A term applied to the students at Oxford by the townspeople. In provincial English, *rubbish*, *refuse*; then a *rowdy*, *scapegrace*; finally, *worthless persons* generally, the *riff-raff* of society.

18. **Snobs.** A "snob" was at first a shoemaker; then, in university cant, a "townsman" as opposed to a "gownsmen"; and, more generally, any common person, or member of the *profanum vulgus*; then one who vulgarly apes gentility; finally, in provincial language, a workman who refuses to strike, or who works for lower wages than other workmen, a "rat," or in the current language of strikes, a "scab." De Quincey has in mind the second usage. See *Century Dictionary*. *Nob*, probably an abbreviation of *nobleman*, is a member of the aristocracy, or any superior person.

19. **Constructively.** By inference; a legal usage.

74 : 16. **Such was the difficulty**, etc. This sentence originally read: "Under coercion of this great practical difficulty we instituted, etc."

30. **Great wits jump.** Great wits agree. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, II, ix. 32: "I will not jump with common spirits."

75 : 5. **The ambassador**, etc. The original of this story is a brief passage in Staunton's *Account of the Earl of Macartney's Embassy to China in 1792*, Vol. II, 164 (London, 1797): "When a splendid chariot, intended as a present for the Emperor, was unpacked and put together, nothing could be more admired; but it was necessary to give directions for taking off the box; for when the mandarins found out that so elevated a seat was destined for the coachman who was to drive the horses,

they expressed the utmost astonishment that it should be proposed to place any man in a situation *above* the Emperor. So easily is the delicacy of the people shocked in whatever relates to the person of their exalted sovereign."

Any curious fact or picturesque incident expanded with a marvelous growth under the warm and fructifying influence of De Quincey's imagination. Any fact, even the most serious, was never safe in his presence. Let it expose but for a moment its picturesque side, and he would expand it into an elaborate fiction, comic or serious, according as the mood seized him. As Gosse remarks, "De Quincey was but little enamored of the naked truth, and a suspicion of the fabulous hangs, like a mist, over all his narrations."

12. **Hammercloth.** The cloth that covers the driver's seat or box, so called, it is thought, from the practice of carrying under it hammer, nails, etc. The clause "was nearest to the moon," was added in the revised version.

25. **Whole flowery people.** China is called the Flowery Kingdom, as well as the Celestial Empire.

76: 10. **Checkstrings.** Strings used by the inside passengers for communicating with the driver.

Jury reins. A *jury-mast* is a temporary mast substituted for a broken one; so a *jury-rudder*. Hence any temporary makeshift may be designated by this nautical combination.

24. **Ça ira.** "'This will do,' 'This is the go'; a proverb of the French Revolutionists when they were hanging the aristocrats in the streets, etc., and the burden of one of the most popular revolutionary songs, *Ça ira, ça ira, ça ira.*" — MASSON. The music of this song was that of a popular air called *Carillon National*, a great favorite with Marie Antoinette. It is said that the words were first suggested by Lafayette to a street-singer, having remembered them from Franklin's common reply, "*Ça ira, ça ira,*" to questions about the progress of the American Revolution.

28. **Chief seats in synagogues.** Cf. Matthew xxiii. 6.

77: 6. **Warming pans.** A warming pan keeps the bed warm until the occupant takes possession. So a person would be hired as a "dummy" to hold a seat until the real occupant arrived.

9. **Aristotle's, Zeno's, Cicero's.** Aristotle, the most influential of the Greek philosophers, wrote valuable works upon almost every topic of human concern, among them being the celebrated *Nicomachean Ethics*. Zeno was the founder of the Stoic school of philosophers, who professed and taught the stern moral doctrine of indifference to pains and pleasures alike. Cicero wrote *De Officiis*, a treatise on moral obligations, the morality of which is that of the practical Roman politician.

78: 6. **Noters and protesters.** A *noter* is a notary (Scotch, *notar*), who "is empowered by law to note protests and certify the same." A note or bill of exchange is said to "go to protest" when payment is refused and the fact is certified by a notary in a "note of protest." The passage is an illustration of De Quincey's characteristic playing with words.

8. **House of life.** An astrological term. The heavens are divided into "houses," to one of which man's life is allocated, to use De Quincey's word, by the astrologer. *Astrological shadows* are the misfortunes of one who is "ill-starred," born under the wrong star.

25. De Quincey confused Von Troil's *Letters on Iceland* with Niels Horrebow's *Natural History of Iceland*, which contains such a chapter, and a similar one on owls. Quite likely De Quincey borrowed the allusion from Boswell's *Johnson* (Vol. III, 316, Hill's Ed.):—"Langton said very well to me afterwards, that he could repeat Johnson's conversation before dinner, as Johnson had said that he could repeat a complete chapter of *The Natural History of Iceland*, from the Danish of Horrebow; the whole of which was exactly thus:—

‘CHAPTER LXII. *Concerning Snakes*

‘There are no snakes to be met with throughout the whole island.’”

26. **Parliamentary rat.** One who deserts his falling party or cause, as a rat deserts a sinking ship. "Though Mackworth *ratted* to my own side, I fear it must be confessed that he did *rat*."—GEORGE SAINTSBURY. In provincial slang "*to rat it*" is to run away quickly.

79: 9. **Læsa majestas.** An offense against majesty or sovereignty, treason. A Roman legal phrase.

80 : 7. **Jam proximus.** Virgil's *Æneid*, II. 311 : —

Jam Deiphobi dedit ampla ruinam
Vulcano superante domus, jam proximus ardet
Ucalegon.

(Now the spacious house of Deiphobus falls in ruins as the fire overtops it, now [the house of his] neighbor Ucalegon burns.)

15. **In Syriac or in Coptic.** That is, in an unknown language.

18. **Waybill.** The passenger list. In England passengers are said to be *booked*, instead of being *ticketed*, and a ticket office is a booking office.

20. **No dignity is perfect, etc.** The characteristic judgment of De Quincey in this passage is amply illustrated in his best writings.

81 : 8. **Crane-neck quarterings.** The horses, suddenly urged by the whip, crane their necks forward as they haul the heavy carts to one side, — *quartering* across the road. See p. 124, l. 14, and De Quincey's note.

15. **Benefit of clergy.** In old English law, the privilege of the clergy, and finally of all who could read, to be exempted from trial and punishment by the civil courts. To test his ability to read, a verse of Latin, usually the first verse of the 51st Psalm, was given to the accused, called the *neck verse*, as by reading it he saved his neck. Cf. *Jew of Malta*, "Within forty feet of the gallows conning his neck verse." The law was not wholly repealed until 1827.

17. **Systole and diastole.** The regular pulsation or beating of the heart consists of two alternate movements, dilation or *di-as'to-le* and contraction or *sys'to-le*.

26. **Quarter Sessions.** A court held quarterly in England in the counties by a justice of the peace, for the trial of minor offenses and the administration of poor laws and highway laws.

82 : 15. **False echoes of Marengo.** At the battle of Marengo, June 14, 1800, General Desaix saved the day for the French, but was himself shot through the heart. "When the report of his [Desaix's] death was made known to Buonaparte, he hypocritically exclaimed, 'Why cannot I weep?'" — GIFFORD'S *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of Napoleon Buonaparte*, Vol. I, 373.

Vengeur (footnote). In a battle between the French and

English fleets, June 1, 1794, the *Vengeur* was sunk. The report that the crew went down with the ship, shouting "Vive la Republique" was circulated by Barère, who, in the opinion of Macaulay, "approached nearer than any person in history or fiction to the idea of consummate and universal depravity." Carlyle accepted the story, in his *French Revolution*, but afterward corrected himself in an essay on *The Sinking of the Vengeur*.

La Garde meurt, etc. (footnote). The "Guard dies, but does not surrender"; said of Napoleon's famous "Old Guard" at Waterloo, supposedly by General Cambronne. The phrase "was invented by Rougemont, a prolific author of *notes*, two days after the battle, in the *Indépendant*." — Fournier, quoted in BARTLETT'S *Familiar Quotations*.

Talleyrand (footnote) was a celebrated French statesman and wit, to whom floating witticisms are attributed, much as witty English sayings are attributed to Sydney Smith.

83: 19. False, fleeting, perjured Brummagem. An echo of *Richard III*, I, iv, 55: "False, fleeting, perjured Clarence." *Brummagem*, a corruption of Birmingham, is a name applied to cheap, showy jewelry and other metal trinkets, manufactured extensively in Birmingham. This part of the sentence was added in the revision.

25. Jacobinical. The Jacobins were the radical and violent democrats of the French Revolution, who were most active in the annihilation of aristocracy.

84: 5. Slipped. A hunting term, to *slip hounds*, or *hawks*, is to let them loose upon the game. **Cheetah** is the name of a species of leopard used in India for hunting. The animal is taken to the field hooded, and at the proper time *slipped*.

10. Tower of moral strength, etc. Cf. *Richard III*, V, iii, 12: "Besides, the King's name is a tower of strength, which they upon the adverse party want."

20. My heart burn within me. Cf. Luke xxiv. 32.

27. A cat may look at a king. A very old saying, found in the "Proverbs" of John Heywood, published in 1546, the earliest collection of English colloquial sayings.

85: 4. Story from one of our elder dramatists. Barrow refers this to Dryden's *Aurengzebe*, but mistakenly. The *Omrahs* are

in that play, but not the story. The word *Omrah* was used by the earlier English authors in the sense of lord or grandee at the court of oriental princes; in reality the plural of *amir* (ameer). Professor Turk quotes a similar story from the translation of Caius's *Of English Dogs* in Arber's *English Garner*, Vol. III, 253. The Indian setting of the story was added by De Quincey in the revision. The original has *prince* in place of *sultan*, and the words *in contempt . . . from Agra and Lahore* were originally *in sight also of all the astonished field-sportsmen, spectators, and followers*.

30. **Paste diamonds.** Imitation diamonds, made of a glass prepared for the purpose, called *paste*.

Roman pearls are imitation pearls made of alabaster, fine wax, and other substances, manufactured especially in Rome.

86:3. **The 6th of Edward Longshanks.** There is no such law. De Quincey is making "game" of the Welshman, whose native country was subdued by Edward I, in 1283. In *Blackwood* it was "the 10th of Edward III, Chap. 15."

24. **Not magna loquimur . . . but vivimus.** We do not speak great things, but live them.

87:18. **Nile nor Trafalgar.** Nelson's two great naval battles with the French. Notice the omission, by "poetic license," of *neither before Nile*.

28. **By culinary process.** By boiling water to make steam.

30. **Laureled mail.** When "going down with victory," the mail coach would be decked with the emblems of victory; "horses, men, carriages, all are dressed in laurels and flowers, oak-leaves and ribbons," p. 97, l. 20.

88:3. **Pot-walloppings.** Literally pot-boilings; Anglo-Saxon *weallan*, to boil; Early English, *walopen*.

89:21. **Ulysses even, etc.** An allusion to Homer's *Odyssey*, Books XXI and XXII, describing the contest of Ulysses with the suitors of his wife, Penelope, several of whom he dispatched with his great "polished bow," which only he could bend to the string.

90:10. **About Waterloo.** About 1815, the year of the battle of Waterloo.

26. **Say, all our praises, etc.** Pope's *Moral Essays*, III, 249: "But all our praises why should Lords engross?"

91: 17. Turrets. Chaucer's use of the word is in *The Knight's Tale*, 1294: "Colers of golde, and toretz fyled rounde," where it refers to the ring on a dog's collar. De Quincey remembered his Chaucer imperfectly.

23. They hanged liberally. Forgery, pocket picking, sheep stealing, and similar offenses were then capital crimes.

24. Tree. The gallows or gibbet.

92: 22. Mr. Waterton. [Sindbad, the sailor in the *Arabian Nights*, being induced to carry the Old Man of the Sea on his back, made him drunk, and then crushed his head with a stone.] Charles Waterton was an English naturalist who published in 1825 *Wanderings in South America*, which contains a description of this remarkable adventure with a cayman. Sydney Smith wrote a review of the book for the *Edinburgh Review* of February, 1826, in which he quoted the passage in full, and quite likely this was De Quincey's source for the story. The real story runs as follows: "By the time the cayman [which was caught by a shark hook and strong rope] was within two yards of me, I saw he was in a state of fear and perturbation; I instantly dropped the mast [of the canoe], sprung up and jumped on his back, turning half round as I vaulted, so that I gained my seat with my face in a right position; I immediately seized his fore-legs, and by main force twisted them on his back; then they served me for a bridle. He now seemed to have recovered from his surprise; and probably fancying himself in hostile company, he began to plunge furiously, and lashed the sand with his long, powerful tail. I was out of reach of the strokes of it, by being near his head. He continued to plunge and strike, and made my seat very uncomfortable. It must have been a fine sight for an unoccupied spectator. The people roared out in triumph, and were so vociferous that it was some time before they heard me tell them to pull me and my beast of burden further inland. . . . It was the first and last time I was ever on a cayman's back. Should it be asked how I managed to keep my seat, I would answer, I hunted some years with Lord Darlington's fox-hounds."

23. Cayman. The proper Spanish word, *caiman*, for alligator, "applied popularly to the alligators of the West Indies and South America." — *Century Dictionary*.

93: 18. Regularly hunted. Regularly ridden in the hunt.

20. Take a six-barred gate. Jump a gate six bars high. An idiom of the turf.

22. If, therefore, etc. This paragraph is only about one fifth as long as when first printed. The original paragraph is given in Masson's Edition, Vol. XIII, p. 289.

23. The shadow of the pyramids grows less. Because of the removal of stones from the sides, and the piling of the drifting sand at their bases.

95: 5. Quartered heraldically. In heraldry, quartering is the division of the shield of an escutcheon into four or more parts, for the purpose of displaying the coats of allied families.

12. Going down with Victory. For an excellent introductory note to this second part of the *Glory of Molini*, see Masson's *De Quincey* (Men of Science Series), p. 193.

19. Long succession of victories. Trafalgar, 1805; capture of the Danish fleet, 1807; Baylen and Vimiera, 1808; Corunna, Talavera, and Oporto, 1809; Busaco and Torres Vedras, 1810; Fuentes de Onore and Albuera, 1811; Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, and Salamanca, 1812; Vittoria and the Pyrenees, 1813; Orthez and Toulouse, 1814; Waterloo, June 18, 1815. In the years 1806 and 1807 Napoleon won his great victories over the Prussians at Jena and the Russians at Eylau.

20. Titans. In Greek mythology a race of giants who made war against the gods of Olympus, making a scaling ladder to heaven by piling Mount Ossa upon Mount Pelion.

21. Inappreciable value. Of very great value, rather than, of very little value, the usual sense of the word.

96: 2. One quarter. England. Nearly all Europe was prostrated in despair by Napoleon's sweeping victories. Only England seemed to make headway against him, in the Spanish peninsula, where he did not command in person.

13. Prelibation. Foretaste.

17. Lombard Street is the financial center, the "Wall Street," of London, so called because the early bankers and money lenders were Lombards or Italians. *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, a street deriving its name from an old church. The present post-office building was erected in 1829.

97 : 2. **Attelage.** A team of horses ; here it means the four horses and the coach to which they are attached.

98 : 14. **Draw up.** The waiting coaches are distinguished by the names of the great towns to which they are destined, and each is ordered to *draw up* in front of the post office to receive its portion of the mail and then to *draw off*.

100 : 20. **Be thou whole.** Suggested by Luke viii. 48.

101 : 27. **Professional salute.** The coachman's *professional salute* is a raising of the elbow of the whip hand.

102 : 13. **Charwomen.** Women who work by day's work or do odd jobs ; old English *chares*, or in Yankee speech, *chores*.

103 : 10. **Gazette.** This word was applied at first to any newspaper ; then specifically to the three official newspapers established by government in Great Britain, published at London, Edinburgh, and Dublin ; finally, as in the text, to any official announcement or account of an important event.

30. **Called fey.** *Fey* or *fay* is not Celtic, as De Quincey assumed, but is the Anglo-Saxon *faege* preserved in Lowland Scotch, meaning *fated, doomed*. The expression "you are surely *fey*" would be applied in Scotland, Masson says, "to a person observed to be in extravagantly high spirits, or in any mood surprisingly beyond the bounds of his ordinary temperament, — the notion being that the excitement is supernatural and a presage of his approaching death or of some other calamity about to befall him."

104 : 1. **Wake.** Originally a vigil or church festival ; hence, any merrymaking, as in Milton's *Comus*, 121 : "Their merry wakes and pastimes keep." The Irish "wake" is a watching with the dead, which deteriorates into a revel.

17. **Holy.** This climax is characteristic of the workings of De Quincey's penetrative insight. He saw truth through the emotions. The words "theatrical and holy" were added in the revised edition.

25. **Imperfect one of Talavera.** At the Spanish town of Talavera Wellington won a great victory, but was unable to reap its fine results on account of the disloyal support of the Spaniards under Cuesta. "The conduct of Cuesta, in this precipitate retreat, is indefensible. . . . In quitting the position of Talavera, Cuesta had abandoned the only situation in which

the advance of Victor on the British rear could be resisted with any prospect of success. . . . The whole calculations of Sir Arthur Wellesley were at once overthrown." — HAMILTON'S *Annals of the Peninsula Campaigns*.

105 : 6. The 23d Dragoons. This charge is described in Napier's *Peninsula War*, Book VIII, Chap. 6, in part, as follows : " In the front of the 23d the chasm was more practicable, the English blood was hot, and the regiment plunged down without a cluck, — men and horses rolling over each other in dreadful confusion ; the survivors, still untamed, mounted the opposite bank by two's and three's, and Col. Seymour being severely wounded, Major Frederick Ponsonby, a hardy soldier, rallied all who came up, and passing through the midst of Villatte's columns, which poured in a fire from each side, fell with inexpressible violence upon a brigade of French chasseurs in the rear. The combat was fierce, but short. . . . Those who were not killed or taken made for Massecour's Spanish division and so escaped, leaving behind two hundred and seven men and officers, or about half the number that went into action."

29. Glorified and hallowed to the ear of all London. For these words the original has "known to myself and all London." For "*To-morrow, said I to myself,*" etc. (l. 5 below) the original was, "I said to myself, to-morrow or the next day she will hear the worst. For this night wherefore," etc.

31. Aceldama. The potter's field outside of Jerusalem, purchased with the bribe which Judas took for betraying his master, and therefore called the "field of blood"; hence, any field of slaughter. Elsewhere De Quincey speaks of "immense tracts converted by war into one universal Aceldama."

107 : 10. What is to be taken, etc. This sonorous introductory question was substituted for the simpler original, "What is to be thought of sudden death?"

14. Consummation . . . fervently to be desired. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 60 : —

"To die, — to sleep, —
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished."

17. **Cæsar the Dictator.** This incident is given by Plutarch as follows: "The day before his assassination, he supped with Marcus Lepidus; and as he was signing some letters, according to his custom, as he reclined at table, there arose a question what sort of death was the best. At which he immediately, before any one could speak, said, 'A sudden one.'" — CLOUGH-DRYDEN TRANSLATION, Vol. IV, 320.

18. **Cæna.** In his essay, *The Casuistry of Roman Meals*, De Quincey explains that the Roman *cæna* corresponded to the modern dinner or evening meal.

21. **Eligible.** Desirable, fit to be chosen; Latin, *eligere*, to choose. The more usual sense is *qualified to be chosen*.

23. **Divine Litany.** The Greek *λιτάνεια*, a prayer. The General Supplication in the Book of Common Prayer, in which the response of the congregation to many of the petitions is, *Good Lord, deliver us*.

108 : 4. **Noblest of Romans.** In his essay on *The Cæsars*, De Quincey maintains Shakspeare's exalted judgment of Cæsar: "The foremost man of all this world." Masson says: "The character of the 'mightiest Julius' is estimated by De Quincey, one is glad to find, as he was by Shakspeare, and has been by every other fit modern authority, as the noblest of Roman men."

109 : 31. **Βιθάνατος.** Greek *βίανος*, violent, and *θάνατος*, death. In his essay on *Suicide*, De Quincey discusses the theme of a treatise by John Donne, entitled, *βιθάνατος*, *A Declaration of that Paradox or Thesis, that Self-homicide is not so naturally Sin, that it may never be otherwise*. From this source he doubtless derived the word, which is not strictly classical.

111 : 2. **One aspect.** In this paragraph De Quincey is philosophizing the particular incident which he is about to describe.

13. **Exasperation.** Here used in the unusual sense of *increase of intensity*.

19. **Far from venial.** There is a moral obligation to act in behalf of one's self as well as in behalf of others.

23. **Apprehensive.*** Sensitive.

30. **Twinkling of an eye.** Cf. 1 Corinthians xv. 51, 52: "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

112: 12. **That dream, etc.** De Quincey uses this illustration again in the *Confessions*. Masson's Ed., III, 316.

27. **The ancient earth groans.** Cf. *Paradise Lost*, IX, 1000-1008.

29. **Nature, from her seat, etc.** From *Paradise Lost*, IX, 782.

113: 10. **The incident, etc.** This explanatory and transitional passage, down to l. 24, was inserted in the revised edition. The original began abruptly: "As I drew near to the Manchester post-office, I found that it was considerably past midnight," etc.

114: 14. **I had left it . . . said pocket handkerchief.** The discoverer of a new land hoists the flag of his country as a token of possession. This characteristically whimsical digression was much elaborated in the revision. For "hoisted his pocket handkerchief once and forever" the original reads "planted his throne forever"; and the close of the sentence reads: "So that all people found after this warning, either aloft in the atmosphere, or in the shafts, or squatting on the soil, will be treated as trespassers—that is, decapitated by their very faithful and obedient servant, the owner of the said bunting."

21. **Jus dominii.** Law of lordship, or ownership. A Roman legal phrase. So below, *jus gentium*, law of nations.

26. **Squatting.** A squatter is one who occupies land to which he has no legal title.

115: 7. **For want of a criminal.** At the end of this paragraph a long passage of fantastic foolery was cut out by De Quincey's revisionary judgment. It explains that there was no other passenger aboard the mail except "a horrid creature of the class known to the world as insiders, but whom young Oxford called sometimes 'Trojans,' in opposition to our Grecian selves, and sometimes 'vermin.'" Like a Turkish Effendi, who never mentions a pig by name, he himself will not mention the insider "by his gross natural name," and explains why this "other creature" was not present at the accident. "We dropped the creature—or the creature, by natural imbecility, dropped itself—within the first ten miles from Manchester." Then, with a serio-comic discussion of a proper epitaph for him, the passage closes with the remark, "But why linger on the subject of vermin?"

8. **Small quantity of laudanum.** At this time De Quincey's opium habit was at its worst, and his judgment as to quantity could hardly be trusted. In 1816, he says, a decanter holding "a quart of ruby-colored laudanum," and "a book of German metaphysics placed by its side," would "sufficiently attest" his being in the neighborhood.

13. **Assessor.** One who sits by another; companion. Latin *assidere*, to sit by.

20. **Monstrum horrendum.** Virgil's *Æneid*, III, 658. The Cyclops Polyphemus, whose eye was put out by Ulysses. The Cyclops were monstrous, man-eating giants, with one huge eye in the middle of the forehead.

25. **Calendars.** The calenders are dervishes, or Mohammedan monks, who go about preaching in the market-places, professing poverty, and living by alms. The allusion is to the *History of the Three Calenders* in the *Arabian Nights*.

116 : 5. **Al Sirat.** The bridge over which Mohammedan souls must pass to heaven, "not so wide as a spider's thread." The wicked fall off into hell below.

9. **Cognominated.** Coined by De Quincey. The Romans sometimes added to the *nomen* (family name) and *prænomen* (individual name) a *cognomen*, as a mark of special distinction, as Publius Scipio *Africanus*.

Cyclops Diphrelates. As originally published in *Blackwood*, this passage reads thus: "I used to call him *Cyclops Mastigopharus* (Cyclops the Whip-bearer), until I observed that his skill made whips useless, except to fetch off an impertinent fly from a leader's head; upon which I changed his Grecian name to *Cyclops Diphrelates* (Cyclops the Charioteer). I, and others known to me, studied under him the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic, and also take this remark from me as a *gage d'amitié*—that no word ever was or *can* be pedantic which, by supporting a distinction, supports the accuracy of logic, or which fills up a chasm for the understanding."

117 : 3. **Procrastinating.** Editors and publishers had trying experiences with this weakness. De Quincey treats the accusation humorously in his essays. In *Surtilege and Astrology* he speaks of "a lecture addressed to myself by an ultra-moral

friend—a lecture on procrastination,” and protests against its publication on the ground that he could not allow himself “to be advertised in a book as a procrastinator on principle.”

28. **Virtually (though not in law).** Kendal is larger and more important than Appleby, the *legal* capital.

The Pythagarian letter *z* is the Greek *Υ*, *upsilon*, which in the language of Pythagarian philosophy “represents the sacred triad, formed by the duad proceeding from the monad.”

118 : 15. **Aurigation.** Driving. Latin *auriga*, a charioteer. Apollo, as the sun god, drives the fiery steeds and golden chariot of the sun across the arch of heaven each day, starting from the purple palace of Aurora, goddess of the Morn.

20. **Whole Pagan Pantheon.** All the gods of the pagans. A De Quinceyish thrust at the human frailties of the ancient divinities. *Pantheon* is a temple dedicated to all the gods; Greek *παν*, all, and *θεος*, a god.

119 : 6. **Pastoral surveillance.** The attorneys watchfully herd the witnesses, as a shepherd tends his sheep.

8. **Middle watch.** On shipboard the day is divided into five *watches*, or periods of four hours each, and two *dog watches* of two hours each. The *middle watch* is from twelve to four A.M. De Quincey originally wrote, “that part of it when the least temptations existed to conviviality.”

18. **Seven atmospheres of sleep.** The pressure, or weight, of one atmosphere is fifteen pounds to the square inch. Sleep was as heavy upon him as *seven atmospheres*.

120 : 5. **Lilliputian Lancaster.** In Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, the hero visits the land of the *Lilliputians*, people only six inches in height. *Lancaster*, though the capital of the country, is a very small town in comparison with its great neighbors, Liverpool and Manchester.

7. **Powerful established interests.** The sitting of the county court, or *assizes*, at Lancaster would be of great material advantage to its citizens, tradespeople, and others. This digressive observation illustrates the vicious propensity of De Quincey's mind for explanations and details that clog and confuse his literary art.

121 : 5. **In the middle of which lay my own birthday.** De Quincey was born August 15, 1785, at Greenhay, near Manchester.

8. **Sigh-born** (footnote). Giraldus Cambrensis, Gerald de Barry (1147–1220), a Welsh historian and ecclesiastic, wrote the *Itinerarium Cambriæ*, or Journey in Wales.

11. **Original curse of labor.** Genesis iii. 19 : “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”

122 : 3. **Halcyon repose.** According to ancient belief, while the halcyon, or king-fisher, is breeding in a nest floating upon the water, the sea is miraculously calm.

19. **Limited atmosphere.** The extent of the atmosphere above the earth’s surface is variously estimated by scientists to be from one hundred to six hundred miles.

25. **Their father’s house.** Cf. John xiv. 2 : “In my father’s house are many mansions.”

26. **Sabbatic vision.** Peaceful, restful vision. The Hebrew word *Sabbath* means day of rest.

123 : 12. **Signal is flying for action.** A naval metaphor. The order for beginning a battle is given by a signal flag on the admiral’s ship.

125 : 16. **Charlemagne.** Charles the Great (747–814), king of the Franks and Emperor of the Romans. No special statue is in De Quincey’s mind. For “imperial rider” the original has “marble emperor.”

19. **Taxed cart.** More commonly *tax cart*; in England, a light open spring cart like the dog cart. Formerly such vehicles were subject to taxation.

27. **Reduced to my frail opium-shattered self.** In the original, “my single self.”

126 : 19. **Gothic aisle.** This avenue of “umbrageous trees” shapes itself into a “mighty minster” in the *Dream-Fugue*. The likeness between Gothic architecture and avenues of interlacing trees has given strong color to the theory that the suggestion for this form of cathedral came from the forests.

127 : 7. **Shout of Achilles . . . son of Peleus, aided by Pallas.** Homer’s *Iliad*, XVIII, 217 *et seq.* :—

“Forth marched the chief, and distant from the crowd,
High on the rampart raised his voice aloud;
With her own shout Minerva swells the sound,
Troy starts astonished, and the shores rebound. . . .
Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he raised,
And thrice they fled, confounded and amazed.”

—POPE’S TRANSLATION.

128 : 18. For a shilling a day. "When a man enlists for a soldier he receives from the recruiting sergeant a shilling ; thus when a man enlists he is said to 'take the Queen's shilling.'"
— BARROW.

129 : 30. Rising to a fence. Rising to leap a fence ; a horse-man's phrase.

130 : 23. Faster than ever mill race, etc. This sentence originally read : "We ran past them faster than ever mill race in our inexorable flight." Masson remarks that De Quincey's "sensitiveness to fit sound, at such a moment of wild rapidity, suggested the inversion."

28. Swingle-bar. The same as swingletree, singletree, and whippetree ; a crossbar, pivoted in the middle, to which the traces are attached.

31. Accurately parallel, etc. The meaning is that the two wheels of the gig were not in a line parallel to the coach ; that is, the gig was turned not quite fully at right angles with the coach.

131 : 8. "This sentence, 'Here was the map,' etc., is an insertion in the reprint ; and one observes how artistically it causes the due pause between the horror as still in rush of transaction, and the backward look at the wreck when the crash was past." — MASSON.

133 (Title) : **Dream-fugue** : The *fugue* (Latin *fuga*, flight) is an elaborate form of musical composition, of which the various parts or melodies are always pursuing each other. The theme, presented in the first part, appears and disappears at intervals, connecting and interweaving the melodies into one complex progressive whole. It will be seen that in composing his dream material into form, De Quincey held very closely to the musical model. The minor elements from *The Glory of Motion*, and the main theme from *The Vision of Sudden Death*, will be readily recognized as they appear and reappear throughout the dreams.

7. **Tumultuosissimamente.** Most tumultuously. To complete the similitude of the musical score, a direction for the tempo or movement is included. There is some force in Masson's remark that this direction "rather repels one, as too suggestive of artificiality and the flourished baton of the leader of an orchestra."

11. **Woman's Ionic form.** Of the three orders of Greek architecture, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, the Ionic is regarded as possessing the most grace and refinement of beauty in its lines and proportions, differing from the massive severity of the Doric as woman differs from man.

18. **Shriveling scroll.** Barrow and Hunter quote Scott's paraphrase of the ancient Latin hymn, *Dies Iræ*, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, v. 31 :—

“ When shriveling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll.”

134 : 8. **It is summer.** In the *Confessions* (Masson's Ed. III, 444), De Quincey says that “ the contemplation of death generally is (*cæteris paribus*) more affecting in summer than in any other season of the year . . . and any particular death, if not actually more affecting, at least haunts my mind more obstinately and besiegingly, in that season.”

12. **Fairy pinnacle.** The “ frail reedy gig ” has now become in dream a *fairy pinnacle*, and the great coach has become a huge *three-decker*, a man-of-war of the old wooden type. The next sentence is a glorification of England's dominion over the sea.

26. **Corymbi.** Clusters of fruit or flowers ; plural of the Latin *corymbus*.

135 : 20. **On the weather beam.** On the weather, or windward, side of the ship.

27. **Quarrel.** A crossbow arrow, having a square or four-edged head ; Low Latin *quadrellus*, Latin *quadrum*, a square.

136 : 25. **Sweet funeral bells.** This third “ movement ” is especially filled with musical effects, beginning with *pianissimo* softness and ending with a grand *fortissimo* climax of victory. Note the transition from the second part to the third, without break of sentence.

138 : 23. **Too full of joy . . . orchestras of earth.** In the original, “ too full of joy that acknowledged no fountain but God, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless anthems, by reverberations rising from every choir, of the *Gloria in excelsis*.”

139 : 8. **Waterloo and Recovered Christendom !** The final

triumph over Napoleon and the French at Waterloo was a relief and a source of rejoicing to England and the greater part of Europe like the relief of a final victory of Christianity over paganism. De Quincey often expresses the excessive views of a loyal English Tory of the period.

16. **The darkness comprehended it.** Cf. John i. 5.

141 : 24. **Crécy.** The battle of Crécy, 1346, in which the English won an illustrious victory over the French.

142 : 9. **Tidings of great joy.** Cf. Luke ii. 10.

13. **A Dying Trumpeter.** "The incident of the dying trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-relief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn and to blow a warning blast." — DE QUINCEY.

143 : 1. **Carried temptation into the graves.** Tempted the dead to rise.

5. **Caught up to God.** Cf. Revelation xii. 5.

9. **Crimson glory.** A beautiful effulgence, like that of the aureola of a saint.

21. **That dreadful being.** "Death, the crowned phantom," in the *Vision*, p. 132, l. 10.

144 : 1. **Then was completed,** etc. This opening sentence originally read : "Then rose the agitation, spreading through the infinite cathedral, to its agony ; then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue." In the revision of this section De Quincey made eighteen changes, all serving to increase and perfect the poetic splendor of the passage.

6. **Choir and antechoir.** In the choir of a cathedral the choristers are seated in stalls along each side, so that the two sections face each other.

12. **Sanctus.** The hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.*

20. **The quick and the dead.** The living and the dead. Cf. 2 Timothy iv. 1.

145 : 1. **Having hid his face.** That is, while Napoleon was victorious.

10. **A thousand times,** etc. Notice the rhythmic character of this magnificent sentence. It scans almost perfectly in

iambics, with a mixture of anapests. Much of De Quincey's "impassioned prose" is as rhythmical as this. The sentence as it originally appeared in *Blackwood* reads thus: "A thousand times, amongst the phantoms of sleep, has he shown thee to me, standing before the golden dawn, and ready to enter its gates — with the dreadful Word going before thee — with the armies of the grave behind thee; shown thee to me, sinking, rising, fluttering, fainting, but then suddenly reconciled, adoring: a thousand times has he followed thee in the worlds of sleep — through storms; through desert seas; through the darkness of quicksands; through fugues and the persecution of fugues; through dreams, and the dreadful resurrections that are in dreams — only that at the last, with one motion of his victorious arm, he might record and emblazon the endless resurrections of his love!"

12. **The secret word.** See p. 139, l. 8. "Every element in the shifting movements of the dream," says De Quincey, "derived itself either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the mail." It would be well for the student to identify the minor elements of the dream with the suggesting incidents of the *Glory of Motion* and the *Vision*; such elements, for example, as in p. 134, ll. 10–13; p. 135, l. 27.

20. **With one sling of His victorious arm.** Barrow quotes *Paradise Lost*, X, 633:—

"At one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well pleasing Son,
Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave, at last,
Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell,
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws."

AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT

When De Quincey revised his essays in 1854 for the *Collective Edition* of his writings, he printed, in the preface to the volume containing the *English Mail Coach*, the following comments and explanation:—

"**'The English Mail Coach.'** This little paper, according to my original intention, formed part of the 'Suspiria de Profundis'; from which, for a momentary purpose, I did not

scruple to detach it, and to publish it apart, as sufficiently intelligible even when dislocated from its place in a larger whole. To my surprise, however, one or two critics, not carelessly in conversation, but deliberately in print, professed their inability to apprehend the meaning of the whole, or to follow the links of the connexion between its several parts. I am myself as little able to understand where the difficulty lies, or to detect any lurking obscurity, as these critics found themselves to unravel my logic. Possibly I may not be an indifferent and neutral judge in such a case. I will therefore sketch a brief abstract of the little paper according to my original design, and then leave the reader to judge how far this design is kept in sight through the actual execution.

“Thirty-seven years ago, or rather more, accident made me, in the dead of night, and of a night memorably solemn, the solitary witness of an appalling scene, which threatened instant death in a shape the most terrific to two young people whom I had no means of assisting, except in so far as I was able to give them a most hurried warning of their danger; but even *that* not until they stood within the very shadow of the catastrophe, being divided from the most frightful of deaths by scarcely more, if more at all, than seventy seconds.

“Such was the scene, such in its outline, from which the whole of this paper radiates as a natural expansion. This scene is circumstantially narrated in Section the Second, entitled ‘The Vision of Sudden Death.’

“But a movement of horror, and of spontaneous recoil from this dreadful scene, naturally carried the whole of that scene, raised and idealised, into my dreams, and very soon into a rolling succession of dreams. The actual scene, as looked down upon from the box of the mail, was transformed into a dream, as tumultuous and changing as a musical fugue. This troubled dream is circumstantially reported in Section the Third, entitled ‘Dream-Fugue on the theme of Sudden Death.’ What I had beheld from my seat upon the mail,—the scenical strife of action and passion, of anguish and fear, as I had there witnessed them moving in ghostly silence,—this duel between life and death narrowing itself to a point of such exquisite evanescence as the collision neared: all these elements of the scene

blended, under the law of association, with the previous and permanent features of distinction investing the mail itself; which features at that time lay—1st, in velocity unprecedented, 2dly, in the power and beauty of the horses, 3dly, in the official connexion with the government of a great nation, and, 4thly, in the function, almost a consecrated function, of publishing and diffusing through the land the great political events, and especially the great battles, during a conflict of unparalleled grandeur. These honorary distinctions are all described circumstantially in the First or introductory Section ('The Glory of Motion'). The three first were distinctions maintained at all times; but the fourth and grandest belonged exclusively to the war with Napoleon; and this it was which most naturally introduced Waterloo into the dream. Waterloo, I understand, was the particular feature of the 'Dream-Fugue' which my censors were least able to account for. Yet surely Waterloo, which, in common with every other great battle, it had been our special privilege to publish over all the land, most naturally entered the dream under the licence of our privilege. If not—if there be anything amiss—let the Dream be responsible. The Dream is a law to itself; and as well quarrel with a rainbow for showing, or for *not* showing, a secondary arch. So far as I know, every element in the shifting movements of the Dream derived itself either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the mail. For example, the cathedral aisle derived itself from the mimic combination of features which grouped themselves together at the point of approaching collision—viz. an arrow-like section of the road, six hundred yards long, under the solemn lights described, with lofty trees meeting overhead in arches. The guard's horn, again—a humble instrument in itself—was yet glorified as the organ of publication for so many great national events. And the incident of the Dying Trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-relief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn, and to blow the warning blast. But the Dream knows best; and the Dream, I say again, is the responsible party."

LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

Introductory Note. This paper is one of several which De Quincey included under the general title *Suspiria de Profundis*, intended as a *Sequel to the Confessions of an Opium Eater*. Other papers in the series are *The Afflictions of Childhood*, *Dream Echoes*, *Vision of Sudden Death* and *Dream-Fugue*, *The Palimpsest*, *Savannah-la-Mar*, *Memorial Suspiria*, *The Apparition of the Brocken*, and *The Daughter of Lebanon*. Many others were planned, but never fully written. Those remarkable productions — the best of them — are the glorified visions of his opium dreams, given a substantial and permanent existence through the conscious effort of art. Of *Levana* Masson says: "This little paper is, perhaps, all in all, the finest thing that De Quincey ever wrote. It is certainly the most perfect specimen he has left us of his peculiar art of English prose-poetry, and certainly also one of the most magnificent pieces of prose in the English or in any other language."

147 : 2. Levare. This verb signifies also, in its derived sense, *to lighten, relieve, console*; hence *alleviate*.

148 : 13. Eton. The celebrated preparatory school, near Windsor, founded by Henry VI in 1441.

14. On the foundation. At the English colleges a student "on the foundation" is one who receives aid from the permanent endowment.

149 : 1. Graces. The daughters of Bacchus and Venus, Agla'ia (brightness), Thali'a (bloom), and Euphos'y-ne (cheerfulness), in Milton's lines : —

" In heaven yelep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth."

2. Parcæ. The Fates, Clotho, Lach'esis, and A'tropos, represented (as in Michael Angelo's picture) as spinning the thread of human destiny.

6. Furies (Lat. *Furiæ*). The avenging deities, Tisiph'o-ne, Alecto, and Megæra, euphemistically called Eumenides "the well-meaning" or "gracious goddesses," because people were afraid to call them by their real names.

8. Muses. The inspiring goddesses of song : in the early his-

tory of art only three are found, represented with the lyre and the flute. Hesiod first named nine. They are Cli'o (muse of history), Euter'pe (lyric poetry), Melpom'e-ne (tragedy), Calli'o-pe (epic poetry), Terpsich'o-re (dance and song), Er'a-to (erotic poetry), Polyhym'nia (sublime song), Ura'nia (astronomy), Thali'a (comedy).

150 : 29. **Mater Lachrymarum.** Mother of Tears ; Lat. *mater*, mother, and *lachryma*, a tear.

151 : 2. **Rachel weeping for her children.** Cf. Jeremiah xxxi. 15; Matthew ii. 18.

152 : 4. **Bedchamber of the Czar.** Princess Alexandra, third daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, nineteen years of age, died in August. 1844.

153 : 5. **Pariah.** This word occurs very frequently in De Quincey's writings. From a very early age his imagination seems to have been strongly affected by the idea of the "social outcast" in all ages and nations.

Bondsman to the oar, etc. Referring to the French method of disposing of criminals.

7. **Norfolk Island.** A small island in the Pacific Ocean, east of Australia ; used as a penal colony for the most heavily sentenced British convicts.

26. **Sepulchral lamps.** The Romans were accustomed to visit the tombs of relatives at certain periods, and to present oblations to the departed soul, as of wine, milk, and flowers. On these occasions lamps, *lucernæ sepulcrales*, were lighted in the tombs.

154 : 8. **Amongst the tents of Shem.** Cf. Genesis ix. 27.

19. **Cybele** (Cyb'e-le). A Phrygian goddess, often called the "Great Mother" or "Mother of the Gods." She is represented, in works of art, seated on a throne with lions by her side, or in a chariot drawn by lions, and crowned with a high, turreted crown.

155 : 13. **Semnai Theai.** The name given to Eumenides at Athens.

14. **Gracious Ladies.** See note on p. 149, l. 6.

APR 26 1906

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
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